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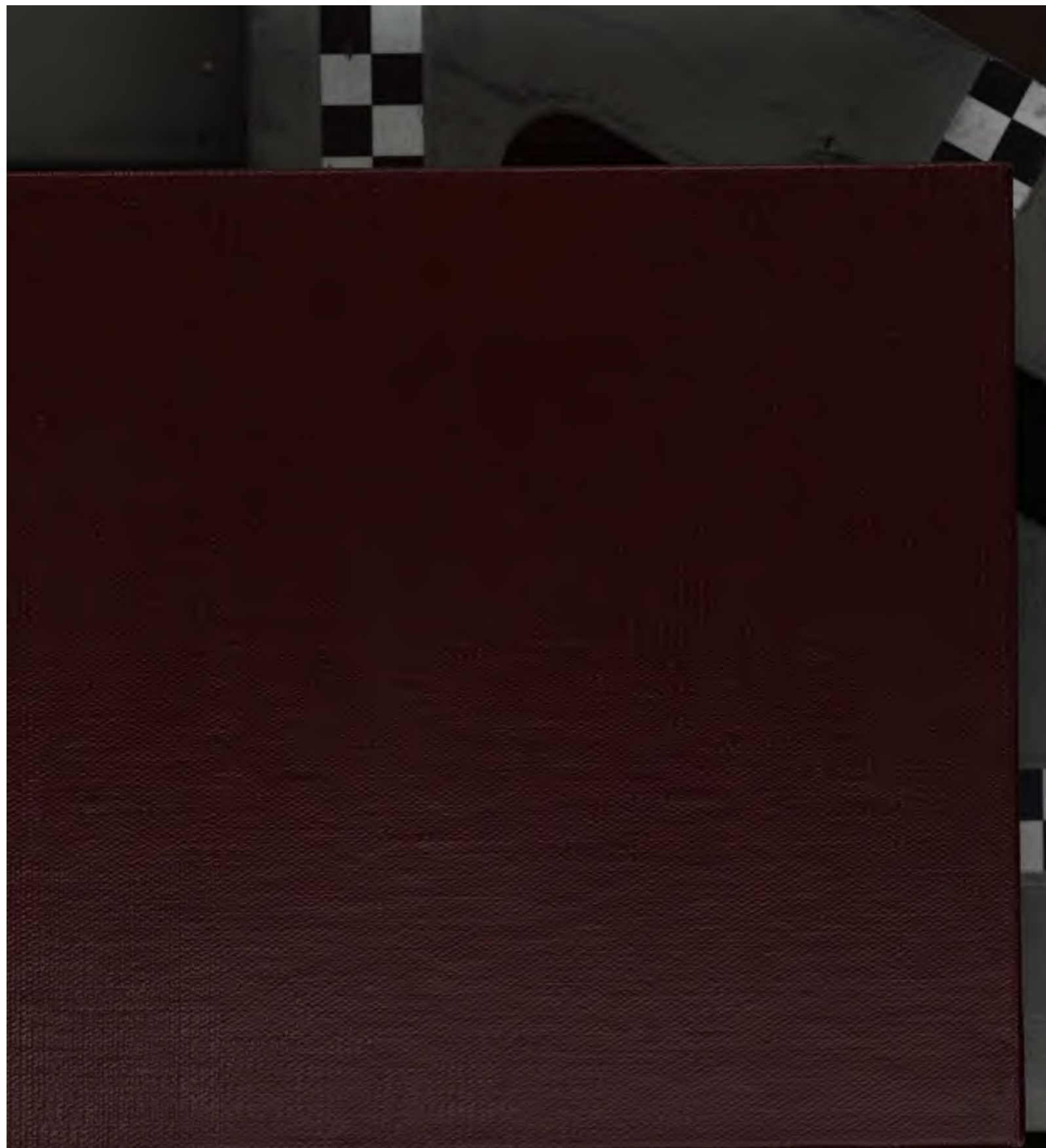
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THE
DRAMAS OF ÆSCHYLUS.

TRANSLATED BY
ANNA SWANWICK.

THIRD EDITION.

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PREFACE TO THE TRILOGY.

It has been truly remarked by Shelley, "that the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet must be composed of his peers; it must be empanelled by time from the selectest of the wise of many generations." By the verdict of this august tribunal, *Æschylus* takes rank with *Homer*, *Dante*, and *Shakespeare*, and may justly be regarded as one of "the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

As it may appear presumptuous to offer to the public a new translation of the *Æschylean* trilogy, the grandest dramatic work of classical antiquity, I may perhaps be allowed to state that I have not entered upon the task altogether uninvited. On the publication of my translation of "*Faust*," and the other master-works of *Goethe*, in *Bohn's Standard Library*, I was strongly urged by the late *Baron Bunsen* to undertake the translation of the Greek dramas. I felt honoured by the proposal; and though I was not immediately impelled to act upon the suggestion, his words have dwelt in my memory, and have encouraged me to complete an arduous and very difficult undertaking.

Considerable diversity of opinion prevails respecting the propriety of employing rhymed metres as sub-

stitutes for the complex forms of classical poetry; hence it may not be inexpedient briefly to state my reasons for adopting them, as affording in my judgment the only adequate vehicle for reproducing the choral odes of the Greek dramas.

With regard to the principles which should guide the translator in the execution of his task, it is, I believe, universally recognized that a translation ought, as faithfully as possible, to reflect the original, both in spirit and in form, and that any wilful or unacknowledged deviation from it is tantamount to a breach of trust. The difficulty of rigidly applying these principles to the translation of the choral odes will be apparent when we remember that the medium through which the thought of the ancient poet has to be embodied differs so essentially from that of the original as to render the principle of imitation, with reference to their musical intonations, inapplicable. The futility of attempting to imitate the forms of classical poetry in a language the metres of which are governed not by Time, but by Accent, has been pointed out by Professor Newman, in the preface to his admirable translation of the *Iliad*, the excellence of which can only be fully appreciated by a careful comparison with the original.

"An accented metre," he says, "in a language loaded with consonants cannot have the same sort of sounding beauty as a quantitative metre in a highly vocalized language. It is not audible scmeness of metre, but a likeness of moral genius which is to be

aimed at." The translator, having thus no authoritative models to necessitate the adoption of particular forms, is at liberty, without incurring the charge of unfaithfulness, to adopt those metres, rhymed or unrhymed, which approve themselves to his judgment as most in harmony with the spirit of the original. In order to fulfil this condition, however, he must take into consideration the highly lyrical character of the choral odes, which associated themselves not only with music, but also with the choral dance.

Now, this lyrical element of ancient poetry, not admitting of translation, requires to be born anew, and for this purpose we have a most felicitous adjunct in rhyme, which, when judiciously employed, may be regarded as a musical accompaniment, pervading the choral harmonies, enhancing their beauty, and at the same time serving to mark the time.

The only possible objection to the use of an ornament so attractive and significant, and at the same time so conformable to the English language, is the notion, very generally entertained, that "the exigencies of rhyme forbid faithfulness." Holding fidelity to the spirit of the original to be the cardinal virtue of a translator, I should, if this opinion were well founded, abandon rhyme without hesitation. It appears to me, however, that the objection is overstated, and that it is better to aim at the true lyrical ideal, however difficult of realization. The solution of the problem can only be worked out by experience. How far I have succeeded in combining scrupulous fidelity to the

original with the employment of rhyme, it is not for me to judge; metrical translation must always be a matter of compromise, and no one can be so sensitively aware of the shortcomings of a translation as the translator.

My desire to bespeak for the dramas of *Æschylus* that intelligent study which is essential for their true appreciation has induced me to attempt in my introduction a very slight sketch of the progress of religious thought, as manifested through a few of the great master-works of literature and art. Poets are representative men; and poetry, under its higher aspects, may justly be regarded as the fairest flower of the age and country which gave it birth, drawing its nourishment from the deepest roots of national life, and concealing beneath its delicate petals the germs of the future. Hence every great poem requires for its elucidation, not only to be studied in connection with contemporaneous history, but also to be brought into comparison with the kindred productions of other ages and nations. New insight is thus gained into the developments of history, and the tendencies of modern thought are more clearly interpreted when brought face to face with the conceptions and aspirations of the old pagan world. If a complete history of religious development were to be given, it would of course be necessary to go back to the prior Monotheism which probably preceded the earliest Pantheistic nature-worship of which we have any record, and also to investigate the links of transition from the Vedic

Divinities to the ideal Personalities of Olympus. Such an inquiry would, however, exceed the scope of an introduction.

In considering the Zeus of *Æschylus* I have confined myself almost entirely to the conception of the Olympian king embodied in the *Oresteia*, leaving untouched the apparent discrepancy between the character there portrayed and that depicted in the *Prometheus Bound*. I agree with those critics who believe that the discrepancy is only apparent, and would vanish had we the opportunity of studying the other members of the Promethean trilogy. Critics are agreed that the *Suppliants* ought also to be regarded as a member of a trilogy, in association with the lost dramas of the *Ægyptii* and the *Danaïdes*. These fragmentary works can, I believe, be only satisfactorily interpreted when studied in connection with the *Oresteia*. The investigation would, however, necessitate a reference to the remaining dramas of *Æschylus*, and must therefore be postponed to a future opportunity.

All true lovers of Art, who recognize her legitimate function as a revealer of truth, a mediator between the Finite and the Infinite, cannot fail to regret the subordinate position to which she is condemned in the present day, when she is too often regarded in the light of a mere elegant superfluity, as one of the costly adjuncts of our modern civilization. The true dignity of art has been nobly vindicated by Hegel in his celebrated work, entitled "*Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik*." A

this work is, I believe, comparatively little known in England, I have ventured to recast, with some modifications, a few of his leading ideas, and to embody them in my introduction. I refer more especially to his analysis of the Greek dramas, and to his exposition of the fundamental ideas which characterize the three great eras—the symbolical, classical, and romantic—which mark alike the history of religion and of art. I have also availed myself of C. O. Müller's admirable dissertations on "the Eumenides," together with Professor Max Müller's lectures on language, second series, and his history of ancient Sanscrit literature. With regard to mythological lore, I am chiefly indebted to Welcker's "Griechische Götterlehre," Kuhn's "Herabkunft des Feuers," and also to Guigniant's "Religions de l'Antiquité," translated from the German of Creuzer.

REGENT'S PARK, June 1865.

PREFACE TO THE FOUR PLAYS.

THE kind reception accorded to my version of the Oresteian trilogy has encouraged me to complete my task by translating the remaining dramas of the great Athenian bard.

It is impossible to determine with accuracy the original number of the Æschylean dramas; the lowest estimate is seventy-five, the highest one hundred. Of this treasure of poetry seven dramas only, together with a few isolated fragments, have escaped the wreck of time. Æschylus has been compared, not inaptly, to the Sphinx of the Egyptian desert, buried up to its shoulders beneath the accumulated sands of ages. "Enseveli et éternel, le front sortant du sépulchre, Æschyle regarde les générations."

The influence of his genius has been far-reaching in space, as well as enduring in time:—it is interesting to consider the vast area over which the spirit and language of Hellas were diffused by means of her colonies, which were found scattered and isolated in every region of the known world; from Spain in the west to the countries bordering upon the Euxine in the east; from Pannonia in the north to Libya in the south.

The importance of poetry as one of the great civilizing forces of humanity was not overlooked by these Hellenic communities. They recognized the prime truth that "the mind of a nation constitutes its firmest bulwark." Theatres accordingly were erected beside their citadels. These edifices, it must be remembered, were not, as with us, mere places of amusement. Owing to the religious element, which from its cradle pervaded the Athenian drama, the Hellenic theatres were invested with somewhat of a sacred character, and their dramatic performances constituted a characteristic feature of the national life. *Æschylus*, we are told, was the favourite poet of the Hellenic colonists.

"*Æschylus* present, Hellas was not altogether absent. His colossal genius thus protected these infant communities from the inroads of surrounding barbarism, and maintained them in the circle of Hellenic civilization."

It would be well if the civilizing agency of poetry were more universally recognized. The human mind requires to be lifted occasionally above the level of ordinary life, where it is exposed to the perpetual harass of material cares. Poetry, the highest embodiment of idealized passion and imaginative thought, must ever be regarded as a mighty agent for the accomplishment of this object. Poets of the highest order belong, however, not to one age or country, but to humanity. It is therefore important that the productions of these master-spirits should be adequately translated and thus rendered generally accessible.

This is more especially true at the present time, when, with the spread of education, the multitude of readers will be indefinitely increased.

Shakespeare has been not inappropriately styled "the modern *Æschylus*;" an association which, to the English reader at least, invests with peculiar interest the prophetic poet of the ancient world. The perusal of his master-works, like those of his great compeer, illustrates the truth proclaimed by the Apostle from the Athenian Areopagus, "that God has made of one blood all nations of men;" notwithstanding the diversity of external surrounding, we discern, in the personages of the *Æschylean* dramas, whether human or superhuman, beings of like passions with ourselves, endowed with the same mental constitution, and subject to the moral laws impressed by the Creator upon our common humanity. In his sublimer passages we soar with the poet as on eagle's wings, and anon we come upon pregnant utterances which

"——— fix themselves

Deep in the heart as meteor stones in earth
Dropped from some higher sphere."

"—— Who can mistake great thoughts?

They seize upon the mind,—arrest and search
And shake it; bow the tall soul as by wind,—
Rush over it like rivers over reeds,
Which quaver in the current."

Such are the thoughts of *Æschylus*!

From all this wealth of poetry many readers are,
however, practically excluded, not only by the foreign

language in which it is embodied, but also by their unfamiliarity with the mythological lore of Hellas. Like travellers in a foreign country, they shrink from the exertion of exploring an unknown region without the assistance of a guide. In order in some measure to supply this want, I have prefixed to each drama a brief introduction, setting forth the main incidents of the situation, together with other explanatory details. In these introductions I make no claim to originality; I have consulted the various works, bearing upon the subject, to which I had access, and from them I have endeavoured to bring together, as concisely as possible, such materials as seemed subservient to the object which I had in view.

With regard to Prometheus, I have felt the impossibility of treating adequately, within the narrow limits of an introduction, a subject so vast, and with reference to which such diverse opinions are entertained. The theory propounded by Schoemann appears to me to be one of the most successful attempts to reconcile the apparent discrepancy between the character of Zeus as portrayed in the Prometheus Bound, and that depicted in the remaining dramas of Æschylus, more especially in the Suppliants and the Oresteian trilogy. I have accordingly given, in my introduction, a brief epitome of some leading ideas embodied in Schoemann's essay, and to that I must refer the reader for a more complete exposition of his views.

In the introduction to my translation of the Oresteian trilogy, I have alluded at some length to the

theory which refers the origin of the Hellenic mythology to the phenomena of the natural world; and which, through the researches of Prof. Max Müller and other mythologists, is shown to rest upon a basis of fact. The application of the theory to the legendary lore of Hellas has given rise to so much controversy, and has opened so wide a field of speculation, that I have abstained from entering upon the subject, and must refer the reader to the Rev. G. W. Cox's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," where it is fully discussed.

Having in the choral odes of my second volume observed the arrangement of Strophe and Antistrophe, which forms a characteristic feature of the original, I have thought it advisable to bring my version of the Oresteian trilogy, in this respect, into harmony with the remaining dramas of Æschylus, and have moreover carefully revised the whole.

In conclusion, I have great pleasure in expressing my grateful acknowledgments to my friend Professor Newman, for his most kind and valuable assistance. This assistance has reference not merely to the interpretation of the more obscure passages of the original, the difficulty of which is greatly enhanced by the corrupt condition of the text, but also to his proposed corrections, for which I refer the reader to the notes printed, as in the Trilogy, at the end of each drama. I have in addition to thank him for important aid in rendering the original into English. The whole of my translation has been submitted to his revision, and, with his permission, I have freely availed myself

of the numerous proposed emendations with which he has from time to time most kindly favoured me.

I am also indebted to my friend Mr. W. W. Lloyd for several valuable suggestions, for which I beg to express my cordial thanks. I moreover gladly acknowledge my obligation to previous commentators and translators.

In the preparation of my introductions I have consulted the following works, from which, for the most part, I have borrowed my materials. Grote's 'History of Greece;' Danson's 'Gott in der Geschichte;' 'Ariadne,' von O. F. Gruppe; 'Die Aeschylische Trilogie Prometheus,' etc., von F. G. Welcker; 'Des Aeschylos gefesselter Prometheus,' von G. F. Schoemann; 'Des Aeschylos Werke,' übersetzt von J. G. Droysen; Hegel's 'Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik.' I am also indebted to an interesting essay on the religion of Aeschylus, by Brook F. Westcott, which appeared in the 'Contemporary Review.' In the preface to my second volume I have borrowed some thoughts from Victor Hugo's 'Shakspere.'

I am happy to state that in a separate volume my translation of the Aeschylean dramas is associated with Flaxman's illustrations.

REGENT'S PARK, 1872.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TRIL

In order to appreciate the poetry of antiquity necessary to take into consideration the ideas which lie at its root, which also in the course of their development have determined the course of their development have determined the course of alike of ancient literature and art; when we moreover, the immense influence which the Greek Aryan thought, by its interfusion with Christianity has exerted over the culture of the Western world, a new and twofold interest attaches to each of the master-works of classical antiquity, as exhibiting not only the level which the religious thought of antiquity had already reached, but also as indicating the direction of its future development.

Accordingly, in offering to the public a new translation of the Oresteia, the only complete trilogy which has escaped the wreck of time, it may not be altogether irrelevant if I endeavour to determine the position of Aeschylus among those kindlers of the drama through whose agency the light of ancient Greek thought was transmitted from age to age before the advent of Christianity.

With this view it will be necessary to give

(necessarily very meagre and imperfect) of the progress of religious thought, both before and after his appearance on the stage of history, and as art has its root in the religious nature of man, we shall thus obtain a key to the three great epochs which mark the artistic development of humanity, which have been characterized as the Symbolical, the Classical, and the Romantic eras.

When the rays of tradition first dawn upon our planet, we discover the primeval ancestors of the Aryan race, before their dispersion from their common home, still gazing with awe and wonder upon the working of the vast nature-powers by which they were environed. While led through the religious instincts implanted in human nature to recognize the existence of a Being or Beings who hear and answer prayer, they were unable to separate the idea of mind, as a causal power, from the aspects of external nature. Accordingly, the shadowy divinities of the Vedic Pantheon, Indra, Agni, Varuna, can hardly be regarded as distinct personalities, holding definite relations to each other, or to their worshippers. As in the fluctuating scenery of the diurnal drama the sun is obscured by clouds, which in their turn are scattered and anon collected again, so these deified impersonations of physical phenomena loom dimly before our mental vision, each supreme and absolute in turn; nor is it easy to determine whether behind these innumerable divinities, the conception of One infinite Spirit had yet dawned upon the Aryan mind.

The deities of the Vedas vanish from our gaze.

"In the deep backward and abyss of time

After the lapse of ages they reappear upon the stage, so modified, however, that it is difficult to trace their identity: on the southern side of the Himalayas they assume the form of the great Brahminic Vishnu, Brahma, and Siva, emerging from the ground of Pantheism; while in Greece we find them metamorphosed into the hierarchy of the Olympian gods. So striking is the contrast between the deities apostrophized by the Vedic bards, and the grand impersonations of Grecian poetry and without conclusive evidence the connection between them could hardly be recognized. This contrast is twofold;—in the first place, comparative mythology reveals the fact that the sacred names of the Vedic Pantheon are in the Vedas intelligible words, descriptive of natural phenomena; while in the Hymns introduced to the Olympian deities during the process of transformation; we detect their forms gradually engaging themselves from the physical phenomena which they were associated, of which also they were regarded as the spiritual but almost impalpable essence.

This transformation of physical into spiritual deities has been compared by Weleker to the metamorphosis process by which the chrysalis passes into its more perfect form. "The Nature-god," he says, "became enveloped in a web of mythical fancies, and emerged as a divine, humanized personality."

the principle which lies at the root of this metamorphosis, he points to the gradual development of human nature, to the growing consciousness of free-will, accompanied by the recognition of mind as a higher manifestation of deity than any material phenomena, and consequently of man as the true *Shekinah*.

As, however, in the earlier Vedic worship men were unable to separate the idea of mind, as a causal power, from the varied aspects of external nature, so, when they began to direct their thoughts within, they were equally embarrassed to distinguish between the divine and human elements in the soul of man. Every inward movement which appeared at all exceptional was ascribed to the prompting of a deity; not only were the nobler emotions of courage and self-restraint referred to divine inspiration (of which in the *Iliad* we find innumerable examples), but the gods are also represented as the authors of delusion (ii. 8, xxii. 24) and treachery (iv. 93), as when Zeus sends the deceitful dream to Agamemnon, and Athena prompts Paudarus to violate the treaty. One of the most noteworthy instances to this perplexity is found in Agamemnon's exculpation of himself touching the outrage upon Achilles (xix. 85):

"I am not guilty, Jove and Fate | and the dusk-roaming
Fury—
Tis these who in assembly fir'd | my breast with savage
frenzy."*

* I have availed myself here and in subsequent quotations of Professor Newman's translation.

A plea, the justice of which is admitted by Achilles, who echoes the sentiment of Agamemnon:

"O Father Jove, great frenesies | to men thou truly sendest."

Moreover, on the first transference of human passion and emotion, together with the conditions of human existence, to the super-mundane sphere, the very conception of divine existence, as absolved from restraint, would lead to the deification of human infirmity together with the higher attributes of humanity: of this we have a memorable example in the character of the Homeric Zeus. This tendency would doubtless be accelerated by the phenomena expounded by Prof. Max Müller, in his "*Lectures on Language*." As the several branches of the Aryan stock dispersed, migrating from their common home in Central Asia, the original signification of words was forgotten or obscured; and thus, language originally descriptive of natural phenomena became transferred to the conditions of human life—a translation which totally metamorphosed the character of the occurrence.

The transference of human faith and worship from the vague nature-powers of the Vedas to the humanized deities of Olympus, together with the association of the latter into a celestial hierarchy, under the supremacy of Zeus, assumed in Grecian mythology the form of a revolution, and was symbolized under the grand old allegory of the battle between the Titans and the Olympian gods. This revolution, involving a variety of complex phenomena, especially the fusion of the

mythology of different tribes or nations into one, was doubtless accomplished in its main features in the ages anterior to Homer.

However, as we have no Grecian literature to illustrate this period, we are unable to trace the history of the transition, nor can we determine how far the current mythology of his age was modified by the individual genius of the great epic bard, whose immortal work, while inaugurating a new epoch in the history of civilization, at the same time exhibits, as has been truly said, the last lingering traces of the primeval age. A superficial acquaintance with the *Iliad* suffices to reveal the original elemental character of the Homeric divinities, a fact which would be more generally recognized, were we not accustomed to carry to the perusal of the earlier poet the conceptions derived from the artistic impersonations of a later age. This transitional character of the Homeric mythology will be more apparent if we carry back to their original root in natural phenomena a few of the Olympian divinities, and then follow the process of their development, as they appear successively in the *Iliad* and in the *Oresteia*. The connection between Jupiter and the sky, familiar to Greek and Latin scholars, may be traced down to the latest period of classical poetry; so Horace—"Manot sub Jove frigido venator." It was reserved, however, for the science of comparative philology to point out the origin of this connection. Thus we learn that "Zeus, the most sacred name in Greek mythology, is the same word as Dyaus in

Sanscrit, which means the sky; and that original Dyu was the bright heavenly deity in India, as we in Greece."

It is remarked by Welcker, that "the greatest when we go back to the highest Grecian antiquity, the idea of God, as the Supreme Being, associated with nature-worship, never entirely suppressed, together the conception of a divine family derived from Zeus."

Accordingly, we recognize in the Homeric three distinct elements, the divine, the physical, the human, welded together into an artificial unity exhibiting a character of marvellous incongruity, dowered with attributes the most inconsistent and contradictory. Thus, in not a few passages, he is presented as the supreme deity—

"Who reigneth mightily over all, both mortals and immortals." (*Il. xii. 212.*) "Whose decree, sanctioned by the nod, is neither deceptive, nor revocable." (*Il. i. 527.*) "The Counsellor, greatest best; Father of gods and men; the Guardian of oath." (*iv. 235.*) "The Vindicator of righteous." (*xxi. 387.*) "The High Arbitrator of war." (*xix. 224.*) superiority over the other gods is forcibly brought out in the beginning of the 8th book (18—27,) when other dwellers in Olympus are invited to grasp golden chain dropped from Heaven's heights, and immovably in the hand of Zeus:

"Lay hold, and throw your force on it, all gods both and female,

Yet never shall ye down to earth, drag from the lofty
heaven
Zeus the supreme deviser.*

It is as the god of compassion that the diviner aspect of his character is the most conspicuous (ix. 502): when we consider the savagery of an age in which human victims were sacrificed to appease the Manes of the dead, and where tendencies to cannibalism may perhaps be detected (iv. 35), (xxii. 345), (xxiv. 212), the prominence given to compassion as an attribute of the supreme Deity is very remarkable.

Notwithstanding these high attributes, no exercise of providential power is ever assigned to the Homeric Zeus; he is beguiled by Hera, yet swayed by her counsel (xvi. 460), and though desirous to save Ilium, yet, at her entreaty, he surrenders it to destruction (iv. 43). Like the heavens, now bright with sunshine, and anon dark with storm, he exhibits all the capricious fluctuations of an elemental power, being alternately malignant and benign, without any apparent motive beyond his own caprice, uninfluenced by moral considerations. Then, again, with regard to his supremacy, not only is it questioned by Poseidon (xv. 185), it is actually imperilled by that deity, in conjunction with Hera and Athena (i. 396—406), and is only rescued from their machinations by the intervention of Briareus.

* Creuser has pointed out the same image in a passage of the Bhagavat-gita.

These legends probably symbolize convulsions of the elements, which threaten to blot out the sky, of which Zeus is the impersonation. In this character, as an elemental god, he is not only the father of rivers, he also presides over all meteorological phenomena.

Thus with his Ægis, the dark storm-cloud, he veils the summit of Mount Ida (xvii. 593), and even occasionally shudders at his dreadful bolt. He rains (xii. 5). He snows (xii. 280). He deviseth hail and piercing sleet and rainy flood (x. 5). He uproots the sturdy oak (xiv. 415), and he snaps the bow-string of Teneer (xv. 460). Occasionally the moral and physical element are most curiously blended, as in the elaborate description of the rain deluge with which he punishes the crooked verdict of the unjust judge (xvi. 385). Many other passages of a similar character might be cited.

But it is in his relation with Hera, and the various heroines who are represented as the objects of his love that the human element in the conception of the Homeric Zeus appears under its most revolting aspect.

His character has accordingly been described as the most repulsive in the whole circle of Olympian life exhibiting the very temper of the most advanced depravity.* "It is the Jupiter of Homer in whom we see first the most complete surrender of personal morality and self-government to mere appetite, and the most thoroughly selfish groundwork of character.

* Gladstone's Homer.

Abandonment to gross passion, ungovernable self-indulgence rises to its climax in him."

We seem to inhale a purer atmosphere when, by the aid of comparative philology, we are enabled to translate back into natural phenomena occurrences which, when transferred to the sphere of human life, are repulsive and revolting. Thus it is not difficult to recognize the physical idea which underlies the conception of Hera, whose name, derived from *ἔρα*, the earth (which has been traced back to the Sanscrit), sufficiently indicates the original conception symbolized by her marriage with Zeus, the sky. Go, the earth, is invoked in the *Iliad*, with Zeus and other divinities (ii. 277; xix. 258). Of the three goddesses, Hera, Dione, and Demeter, in whom the primeval goddess reappears mythically metamorphosed (who also originally held the same relation to Zeus as seen on ancient coins), Hera is alone distinguished in the *Iliad* as the Queen of Heaven, while Demeter, without Divine significance, is alluded to in connection with agricultural pursuits (xiii. 322; v. 500), and Dione appears as the mother of Aphrodite (v. 370).

It was through the Achaean race that Hera acquired her high position in the Olympian theogony: among a warlike people, who abandoned agriculture to their dependants, the physical attributes of the goddess were gradually obscured, and accordingly we find her in the *Iliad* as the peculiar patroness of Achilles, chief of the battle-loving myrmidons (i. 208; ix. 254). Though the physical attributes of Hera are almost entirely

suppressed in the *Iliad*, we trace a curious lingering of the natural element in the *Theogonia*, described with such luxuriance of imagery in the 14th book (345-351). "As the story of the Olympian Father descending as golden rain into the prison of Danaë was meant for the bright sky, delivering earth from the bonds of winter;" so the union of Zeus and Hera, shrouded in golden mist, doubtless typified the same natural phenomenon, followed as it was by a new outgrowth of tender herbage, "the lotus, the crocus, and the hyacinth." A similar remnant of natural symbolism might probably be detected in other Homeric legends which in their human aspect are puerile and revolting as when the refractory spouse of Zeus hangs suspended by a golden chain, a pair of anvils attached to her ankles (xv. 19). How far Homer recognized the original significance of these legends is an interesting but still unsettled question.—Müller (*Proleg.* 279).

If from the thundering, cloud-compelling Zeus of the *Iliad*, we turn to the Zeus of the *Oresteia*, the contrast is so remarkable, that it would almost appear as if the great dramatist, by the very emphasis with which he brings out the providential character of the Supreme Ruler, desired, like his contemporary, Pindar, to enter his protest against the unworthy conception of the Epic bard. This hypothesis seems the more plausible when we consider that the age of Aeschylus immediately succeeded that of Pisistratus, who had given his sanction to the enactments of Solon, "by

which the *Iliad* was raised into a liturgy, periodically rehearsed by law at the greatest of the Athenian festivals;" "exhibiting for the first and last time in the history of the world the preservation of a poet's compositions made an object of permanent public policy."

Accordingly, in the opening chorus of the *Agamemnon*, Zeus is represented as conducting in person the grand judicial retribution which, in consequence of the crime of Paris, involves Ilium in ruin. In the second chorus this providential action of Zeus is brought out with even stronger emphasis; he is there represented as having with prescient might foreordained the blow which fell at length in accomplishment of his decree. The mighty act of Divine retribution is cast over the devoted city, and the character of Zeus is vindicated as the righteous governor of men. So again in the third chorus, it is Zeus, protector of the guest, who sends Helen, a fury fraught with destruction, to avenge on the sons of Priam the violated rights of hospitality; and whereas, in the *Iliad*, there is division in heaven, the deities, swayed by motives purely personal, and often of the lowest character (xxiv. 30; iv. 48), take part in the quarrel, and appear arrayed against one another in the hostile ranks;—in the *Oresteia*, on the contrary, they are represented as leagued with Zeus in carrying out the great ends of justice. Thus, when the cause is brought before the celestial tribunal, "without dissentient voice they cast their votes into the bloody urn, sealing the doom of Troy." (Ag. 789.)

Zeus is not only represented as exercising supreme authority in the moral government of mankind—

"In will, in deed,
Sole cause, sole fashioner" (Ag. 1462);

he also acts inwardly on the souls of men: it is Zeus whose highest gift is an untainted mind (Ag. 900); who leads men to wisdom through suffering (Ag. 169); a function in which he is aided by the subordinate deities (Ag. 175), who are represented as the exponents of his will. (Eum. 588.)

In the *Suppliants*, together with a curious lingering of the mythological element, we find the grandest ascriptions of omnipotence to the Olympian king. Thus, he is invoked as "King of kings, most blessed of the blest, among the Perfect, Power most perfect, Zeus, supreme in bliss!" (Sup. 518.) He is characterized as "Mighty Zeus, Protector of the guest, the Highest, who directs Destiny by hoary law." (Sup. 655.) "Zeus, Lord of ceaseless time" (Sup. 567), "almighty Ruler of the earth." (Sup. 795.) He is likewise apostrophized as the great Artificer, supreme Ruler, who knows no superior, whose deed is prompt as his word to execute the designs of his deep-counseling mind. (Sup. 587.) Thus the mythological vesture, woven of Nature and Humanity, which had well-nigh shrouded the grander features of the Homeric Zeus, is partially withdrawn in *Æschylus*, and we behold a Being whom men could worship without degradation, till in the fullness of time the light of celestial

Truth burst with clear effulgence on the heathen world.

We can hardly imagine that the capricious elemental deity of the *Iliad* should have been metamorphosed into the venerable deity of the *Oresteia* by the slow process of spiritual development alone, without the action of external agency: if we consider the affinity between the Hellenic and the Persian races, and the close contact into which they were brought in Asia Minor, the modification of Grecian thought by the interfusion of Persian elements will not appear remarkable. In support of this hypothesis, I might appeal not only to the high spiritual character attributed to Ahura-Mazda, the Zeus of Zoroaster, but also to the sharp contrast there exhibited between the principles of Good and Evil, a feature which strikingly distinguishes the theology of Æschylus from that of Homer.

The relics of ancient sun-worship which are discovered in various localities of Greece bear witness to the vast influence exerted by the celestial luminary over the imaginations and the religious emotions of the primeval world, an influence which is also attested by the numerous divinities in whom the Sun-god reappears, mythically metamorphosed. Helios, in the *Iliad*, is characterized as "the Unweariable;" "the Bringer of light;" like Mithra, who has a thousand ears and ten thousand eyes, "He overseeth all, and hearkeneth to all things" (iii. 277). On the reconciliation of Agamemnon and Achilles, a bear is sacrificed to Helios

and to Zeus (xix. 197). The Trojans sacrifice to the Earth and to Helios, the Achæans to Zeus (iii. 104).

In the opening chorus of the *Agamemnon*, the ancient Arcadian Sun-god, Pan, whose name is not mentioned in the *Iliad*, is associated with Zeus and Apollo, as sending the Fury to punish crime. The original character of this divinity, who with Zeus and Apollo shares the epithet *Lykeios*, is betrayed by many significant symbols, associated with his effigies and his worship. Among the various impersonations of the Sun, however, there is none which can compare in interest and significance with Dionysos and Apollo, both solar divinities, whose worship, nevertheless, offers many remarkable points of opposition and contact.

The celestial luminary was imagined to sleep during the winter and to awake to consciousness in spring; accordingly Dionysos, rising from the sea at the vernal equinox to inaugurate the new solar year, was hailed with transports of joy by his enthusiastic votaries. The fluctuating character of Dionysos reminds us of the nature deities of the Vedas; Proteus-like, he assumes every variety of form and age; he is the god of summer and of winter, of darkness and of light; he holds in his hand the inebriating chalice, together with the cosmical mirror, exhibiting the images of all things. His worship is of peculiar interest, from its association with the Greek drama. Grecian tragedy, as is well known, was an expansion of the choruses chanted at the Dionysic festivals, which rehearsed the vicissitudes of the solar god, in his progress through the heavenly

signs. This circumstance exerted "an overruling effect upon the quality of the Athenian drama;" "from this early cradle of tragedy arose a sanctity which compelled all things to modulate into the same religious key."*

Peculiar interest moreover attaches to Dionysos, from his association with the mysteries which exerted so powerful an influence over the Grecian mind.

The story of Dionysos, embodying some of the main features of his worship, appears in the *Iliad* (vi. 132), invested, however, with ethical, not religious significance. "It is a remarkable circumstance that precisely those divinities, Demeter and Dionysos, whose truly religious influence was most profound and pervading in Greece, are all but unmentioned in Homer, and may be said, in fact, to be excluded from his scheme of the divine community."† An interesting question arises as to the cause of this omission on the part of the great epic bard. Are we to imagine that the peculiar sanctity which attached to these divinities induced him deliberately to avoid the subject; or must we conclude that in the Homeric age their worship had not yet assumed that mysterious and impressive character which subsequently distinguished it? I confess I am unable to decide the question, but incline to the latter hypothesis.

* *Theory of Greek Tragedy.* De Quincey.

† Homer, his Art and his Age. W. Watkiss Lloyd, *Classical Museum*, XXII.

The original solar signification of Apollo is maintained among other eminent scholars by Creuzer, Welcker, and Gerhard, who appeal alike to ancient monuments and coins, and to vestiges of ancient Sun-worship found in various localities in Greece. "If we desire," says Creuzer, "in studying Greek mythology, to reach its ultimate roots, we must explore the ancient literatures of Persia and India. If from this point of view we investigate the original identity of the Sun-god and Apollo, we shall find in the figurative language of the Vedas the primitive occasion of the transition from the former to the latter."

One of the most striking features of the ancient Sun-worship was its dualistic character, founded upon the twofold aspect of the solar luminary, as at the same time a beneficent and a destroying power, as conquering and conquered, as dying, yet endowed with ever-renewed life; a conception which explains the enigma said to be uttered by the oracle of Apollo at Claros, in Ionia, "I am Jupiter Ammon in Spring, and black Pluto in Winter." In order to understand the more terrible aspects of the ancient Sun-god, we have only to remember the annual fevers occasioned by his scorching rays, and the danger of famine from failure of the crops: after the lightning of Zeus, there was no natural agent so destructive as the arrow of Helios; as calamity, moreover, was regarded in ancient times as the expression of Divine anger, expiatory and penitential rites formed an essential element of the ancient Sun-worship. This twofold aspect of Helios finds

expression also in the name of the latter Sun-god, Apollo, which, in the ancient Doric Æolian form, was not Ἀπόλλων, the Destroyer, but Ἀπειλλων, the Averter. It is under his darker aspect "as the Minister of Vengeance, and the Chastiser of Arrogance," that he appears for the most part in the poetry of Homer. "His punishments are pestilence and death;" "Achilles, to whom he is particularly hostile, calls him the most pernicious of all the gods."*

While the Homeric Apollo, in his relation with mortals, appears thus in the light of a malevolent and destroying power, among the Olympians he is introduced in association with the Muses, as the god of Music, charming the assembled deities with his harp (i. 603). The notion that the stars and the other heavenly bodies accomplished their revolutions to the sound of music is expressed in the ancient poetry of India, and also in that of the Persians. As the rhythm of the cosmical movements depended upon the solar luminary, the great orderer of times and seasons, it is not surprising that from the most remote antiquity the Sun-god was represented as playing on the cithara; in this character he is portrayed on the oldest Archaic vases, encircled by the dancing hours.

Although in the *Oresteia* Apollo is introduced incidentally as a destroying and avenging deity, as in the passage already quoted in the 1st Chorus of the *Agamemnon*, and also where he is invoked by Cassandra

* C. O. Müller's *History of the Dorians*.

as her destroyer (1047), he nevertheless wears, for the most part, a more benignant aspect. He is emphatically the Healer, the Prophet-ecceh, who purifies from all defilement (Eum. 62); the god of joy, whom it befits not to invoke with words of sorrow (Ag. 1056): the most striking point of divergence from the Homeric conception of Apollo is to be found in his relation to Zeus, with whom he appears in the most intimate association. As the god of prophecy, the guardian of the sacred oracles, he declares most emphatically that he is simply the expounder of his father's will, and consequently that he cannot lie. (Eum. 585, 588.) It is under this aspect, as the god of Truth, that a deep significance attaches to the function which he assumes in the court of Areopagus as Exegetes, or expounder of the unwritten law. "At Athens, the Exegete, who presided over the purification of blood-guilty persons, were elected, or at least their election was ratified, by the Delphic Oracle."* In this character, Apollo appears before the Areopagites, to expound the law in relation to homicide, and thus the deep-thoughted poet enforces the important principle that the judicial proceedings of human tribunals must be under the presidency of Truth.

According to Welcker, however, the Moon appears of all natural objects to have been the most universally adored. Several tribes in Africa and America are said at the present day to worship the moon without the

* Dissertations on the *Eumenides*. C. O. Müller.

sun, while no nation has been known to whom the sun is sacred without the moon. In primeval ages the computations of time were based upon the changes of the moon, which accordingly in the Indo-Germanic languages is known as "The Measurer;" and so deeply did the lunar phenomena appeal to the religious emotions of humanity, that among all early nations, as well as among the Jews, the new-moon festivals were celebrated with peculiar solemnity. In warm climates, moreover, vegetation is nourished almost entirely by the dew, which falls most copiously when the moon is full; hence Selene was early characterized as the mother of Herse, the Bringer of the Dew. It would be very interesting to trace the various media of transition by which the bright nocturnal luminary was gradually metamorphosed into the Huntress Diana—

"Fair silver-shafted queen for ever chaste,
Who set at nought the frivolous bolts of Cupid."

So great, however, is the diversity of form under which the Moon-goddess has been conceived, exhibiting a different physiognomy in every different locality, according to the varied aspect under which she has been regarded, that I must content myself with a brief notice of her characteristics, as she appears in the *Iliad* and the *Oresteia*.

To the goddess of the green-wood and the glade belonged of right all animals both tame and wild; accordingly she is characterized in the *Iliad* as (*πόρνα θηρῶν*), "Queen of all Venison" (xxi. 470),

and in the *Agamemnon* she is represented as taking under her especial care—

"The tiny brood
Of all wild things that love the teat,
Whether of gentle or of savage mood." (Ag. 138.)

While thus gracious to the lower animals, towards humanity, on the contrary, she, like the Homeric Apollo, wears the aspect of a destroying rather than of a benignant power. Thus she is represented as made by Zeus (*λέοντα γύναισι*), "a lion unto women, to whom he hath granted might to slay whomso she willeth" (xxi. 484). Accordingly, in her anger she slew Laodamia, daughter of Bellerophon (vi. 205), and wrathful, on account of her neglected rites, she sends the savage, white-tusked boar—

"Who visited with dire annoy | the orchard-grounds of
Ceneus." (ix. 540.)

Andromache, too, in her address to Hector, alludes to her mother slain by "arrow-pouring Artemis." (vi. 428.)

In the *Agamemnon* she appears under the same dark aspect, as the goddess for whose propitiation the sacrifice of Iphigenia was consummated, a tragedy which, by calling down upon her husband the vengeance of Clytemnestra, forms the groundwork of the drama.

Far more prominent, however, is the position assigned to the Maiden Goddess, Pallas Athena, who may be justly regarded as the bright, consummate flower

of Grecian mythology; and most interesting it is to trace the history of her growth from her rise in the land of the Aryans to her culmination in the majestic goddess of the Eumenides.

The elemental character of the Homeric Zeus suggests the idea of some natural phenomenon underlying the extraordinary birth of his brilliant offspring, "from no mother born." Accordingly her name has been regarded as corresponding to the Sanscrit *Aláná*, a recognised appellation of the dawn in the *Veda*; and thus her miraculous birth from the head of Zeus, translated back into Sanscrit, implies that *Ushas*, the Dawn, sprang from the East, the forehead of the sky.* *Welcker* gives a different interpretation of her name. "The Grecians," he says, "brought with them from their distant home the conception of an element of light and warmth above the atmosphere, independent of the sun." He derives her name from *aiθ*, to burn, with the ancient suffix *ῥη*, and regards her as the impersonation of the pure Ether, the abode of Zeus.

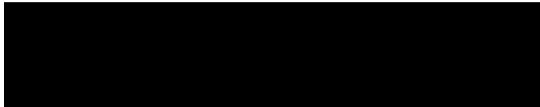
The peculiar rites with which her worship was celebrated in different localities, together with the symbolism associated with her effigy on ancient vases and coins, attest, according to *Welcker*, the original elemental character of the goddess. This deified impersonation of a nature-power, whether identified with the Ether or the Dawn, became gradually invested with a variety of attributes, human and superhuman; accord-

* *Max Müller. Lectures on Language. 2nd Series.*

ingly, the Athena of the *Iliad*, though more sharply defined than the Olympian Zeus, nevertheless exhibits the same transitional character which marks the other deities of the Homeric theogony. In her divine capacity she is the goddess of war and of industrial art, the representative of practical sagacity as opposed to poetic inspiration, which was assigned to Apollo. She hears and answers prayer; she acts inwardly on the minds of the Hellenic heroes; she restrains the wrath of Achilles (i. 198); she imparts aid to Tydeus (iv. 390). Many similar examples might be adduced. Nevertheless she is not above the practice of deceit, as when she persuades Pandarus to violate the treaty (iv. 94), and also where she lures Hector with guile. Moreover, the intimate connection between the bright, heaven-sprung goddess and her father, which in the later mythology forms one of her most striking characteristics, is only slightly indicated in the *Iliad* (viii. 38, 373). In general, her relation to the Thunderer is one of hostility; she is represented as leagued with Hera and Poseidon in their attempt to shackle Zeus, for whom she expresses her contempt in no measured terms, while with Hera she appears most intimately associated:

"Close sat they, side by side, and woes against the Trojans plotted,
Truly Athena dumb abode before her proper Father,
Though wounded by his argument, and seized with fierce displeasure. (viii. 458; iv. 21.)

Traces of meteoric symbolism in connection with the virgin goddess may, I think, be traced in the *Iliad*.



It is interesting to remember in this connection the Aryan myth according to which the gods allowed the heavenly soma-drink, the Vedic prototype of the Grecian nectar, to be brought down to earth by a falcon. In illustration of this subject Kuhn quotes two Vedic hymns (R. iv. 26), (R. iv. 27), in the first of which occurs the following passage:— "The speckling falcon, the strong bird, allied to the gods, brought the quickening, invigorating soma from afar, stealing it from highest heaven."

When Athena and Apollo

"Over the armies take their seats, in guise of plumed vultures,

Upon the lofty beech of Zeus, the Ægis-holding Father,"
(vii. 59.)

they remind us of the two birds who sit in friendly fashion upon the summit of the soma-bearing tree of the Vedas. Thus, too, she sends a heron to greet Ulysses and Diomedes; they recognized the cry, and rejoiced in the divine message (x. 275). Welcker detects a figurative allusion to meteoric fact in the epithets *γλαυκῶπις* and *τριτογένεια*, by which the Homeric Athena is distinguished.

If we turn now to the Athena of Æschylus, the grand impersonation of the wisdom, benignity, and might of her father, we recognise, as before, the emergence of the classic ideal from the symbolizing tendencies of the earlier nature-worship. Seldom has the imagination of poet been haunted by a more majestic image than the Athena of the Eumenides; and

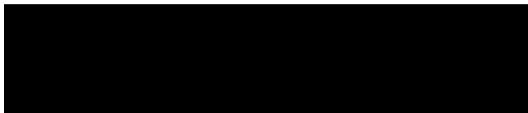
as we picture her "like an orator on the *Bēma*," organizing the court of the Aroopagus, she recalls the grand vision of Divine Wisdom recorded in the book of Proverbs (viii.). She, too, standeth in the top of high places, and her voice is heard, unfolding the great truth that human laws and institutions are entitled to reverence only in so far as they are based upon the strong foundations of eternal justice and morality.

"By me kings reign and princes decree justice;
By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the
earth." Prov. viii. 15, 16; compare Eum. (461, 535).

Most emphatically does the Grecian poet proclaim through the lips of Athena, that righteousness must be based upon reverence and holy fear, thus coinciding with the highest utterance of Hebrew wisdom; "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. viii. 13), (Eum. 661, 669). Thus, too, wisdom is represented by the Grecian as by the Hebrew bard, as presiding over the phenomena of external nature (Prov. viii. 27), (Eum. 792). Yet while Athena alone unlocks the sealed thunder-halls of Zeus, she, like her Hebrew prototype, "rejoiceth in the habitable parts of the earth," and as a gardener cherishes his saplings, so "she loves the race of righteous men, exempt from suffering" (Eum. 872). This recognition of moral distinctions as the ground of divine favour forms, perhaps, the most striking point of divergence between Homer and Æschylus, and forcibly recalls the high moral tone of the religion of Abura-Mazda.

Truly it may be said of the Virgin Goddess that, like the golden dawn, which she is thought to impersonate, she brightens more and more, still heralding by her effulgent but imperfect light the advent of the perfect day. In following the history of the Virgin Goddess, it is interesting to remember that the disappearance of her colossal statue from the Parthenon in the fifth century was coincident with the hymn addressed to her by her passionate worshipper, the neo-Platonist, Proclus; thus at the last "she makes a swan-like end, fading in music," and vanishes from history, after commanding, for upwards of a thousand years, the love and veneration of her votaries.

In connection with the study of ancient poetry, as recording the religious life of humanity, it is interesting to consider the history of plastic art, which may be regarded as its sensible expression, and as manifesting, through the medium of ideal forms, the successive stages of its development. Thus if we revert to that phase of the religious life which is embodied in the earliest literary relics of the Aryan race, we shall recognize the impossibility of embodying in harmonious forms beings so impalpable as the deities apostrophized by the Vedic bards. In the poetry of those early times we discern the working of the untutored mind struggling to body forth, through the imagery of external nature, its religious yearnings and aspirations; embarrassed by the complexity of unintelligible phenomena, and destitute of any principle of selection, the imagination runs riot, blends together images the most



finds its explanation in these grand central truths of Christianity, which have left their impress alike on art and on literature. Thus, in the head of our Saviour in the *Cena* of Leonardo da Vinci, we see that marvellous union of sublimity and pathos, which, while lifting the soul into a higher atmosphere, at the same time appeals to the deepest sympathies of the human heart. Thus, too, the grand figures of the Sistine Chapel, the prophets and sibyls of Michael Angelo, while exhibiting the human form cast in the majestic mould of the Olympian gods, bear traces, at the same time, of those inner life-struggles which impart to every noteworthy countenance so deep and often so tragic an interest. The literary productions of the romantic era also bear witness to the deeper significance which attaches to human nature since the advent of Christianity—a phenomenon the recognition of which is essential to the true appreciation of classical literature.

The fundamental distinction between the ancient and modern drama will be more fully recognized if we bring into closer comparison the two great fathers of dramatic art, *Æschylus* and *Shakespeare*, who, though separated from one another by an interval of nearly twenty centuries, yet offer some remarkable points both of analogy and contrast.

In studying the dramas of *Æschylus*, when we penetrate below the surface, we find that the solution of problems, ethical and religious, bearing upon man's nature and destiny, constitutes their essence, an object to which the delineation of character is made subser-

vient; whereas in the dramas of *Shakespeare* the development of character constitutes the primary aim, to which he subordinates the underlying idea of the whole; accordingly we should vainly seek in the impersonations of the ancient bard that marvellous insight into the more subtle phenomena of human nature which imparts so intense an interest to the productions of *Shakespeare*. In *Æschylus* the collision between moral principles, whose harmonious action is essential to the moral order of the world, is set forth by personages, human and superhuman, whose characters are drawn in bold relief, without exhibiting that delicate shading which charms us in the delineation of the modern bard. These personages are led in obedience to one moral principle to violate another, which in its turn finds advocates and champions. The collision between these opposing interests and the various passions evoked in the struggle sustain the interest of the drama, while the *dénouement* exhibits the vindication of eternal order by the triumph of that principle which is of primary obligation. If we apply these principles to the *Oresteia*, we find that while the several members of the trilogy are linked together by a chain of ethical sequence, which resolves itself into the great doctrine of retribution, each drama is at the same time devoted to the solution of a particular problem, and constitutes accordingly a complete and independent whole.

The collision of duties set forth in the *Agamemnon* is of peculiar interest, as illustrating a struggle which

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has its counterpart in the most touching narrative of Jewish history. Agamemnon, as king and army chief, receives what he believes to be a divine command to propitiate Artemis by the sacrifice of his daughter; an ordeal, the terrible reality of which can only be appreciated when we consider the proneness to human sacrifice which characterized the early ages of society. Abraham, when subjected to a like trial or temptation, after manifesting his perfect submission to what appeared to him to be a divine monition, was led to recognize the true voice of God as harmonizing with the most sacred intuitions of the human heart, and accordingly forbore to slay his child.* Agamemnon, on the contrary, yields to the suggestion of Calchas, and by the sacrifice of Iphigenia violates his obligations to his daughter and his wife. Clytemnestra appears as the avenger of her child, and in vindication of nature's violated rights, prepares for her husband an ignominious death. The stern reprobation of Agamemnon expressed by the Chorus may be compared to the sublime protest of Micah, and other Hebrew prophets, against such deeds of blood. Thus the cruel perversion of religion which found expression in human sacrifice was condemned by the Grecian poet no less than by the Hebrew sage, a consideration which invests the *Æschylean* drama with profound significance.

* I have followed Dean Stanley's interpretation of this narrative.

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In order to appreciate the fundamental idea which underlies the drama of the *Choephori* we must take into consideration the sacred duty of avenging blood "recognized by the earliest customs and national law of the East as well as of the West."* On the murder of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, it was the bounden duty of his son Orestes to avenge his death; the ghost of his murdered father and the Delphic god demand it of him. The collision, therefore, which forms the groundwork of the drama is between the duty of Orestes as the avenger of his father, and his instinctive recognition of the reverence due to his mother, which tends to withhold him from the commission of the deed. With admirable skill the poet makes us feel the terrible nature of the struggle, and the religious motives which decide the issue. When Orestes, almost overcome by his mother's agonizing entreaties, hesitates to commit the bloody act, Pylades, who has accompanied him as a representative of the god, admonishes him of his duty, exclaiming—

"Choose all for foemen rather than the Gods."

A profound thought underlies the greater heinousness attached to the murder of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, than to the murder of Clytemnestra by Orestes. The bond which unites the mother and the son, which Orestes is required to violate, is instinctive, resting upon a law of nature; the tie which unites the

* *Dissertations on the Eumenides.* C. O. Müller.

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husband and the wife is of a different order, involving intelligent volition and reciprocal engagement. The institution of marriage, moreover, lies at the root of all law and order, and with the consequent permanence and sanctity of the domestic relations is the sole guarantee for the healthy development of society; hence the conjugal tie requires to be placed under the special guardianship of the gods and of eternal justice. Hera, who in the *Iliad* plays so prominent and often so undignified a part, is introduced in the *Orestes* in her grand matronly character, her union with Zeus being alluded to as imparting sanctity to the marriage tie. A comparison between the *Choephori* of *Æschylus* and the *Hamlet* of *Shakespeare* may serve to exhibit more strikingly the fundamental difference between the ancient and modern drama. In both tragedies the father of the hero has been murdered, and the mother has married the murderer; in both, the son is urged by supernatural visitations to avenge the crime, and both are prompted by the same motives of disappointed ambition. In the ancient drama, however, the death of Agamemnon is represented as the vindication of a moral principle, violated in the person of Clytemnestra. Accordingly, when pleading for her life, she not only appeals to the filial reverence of her son, but also represents herself as having, by the death of her husband, accomplished the ends of divine justice. In the modern drama the murder of the king is represented as an act of pure wickedness; hence when Hamlet is summoned to avenge his father's death, no

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external object which claims his to check his purpose. The hesitations come from within; accordingly he does not in opposing moral principles, the character of Hamlet. His soul is torn by the deed of horror; consumed in his resolution, and overwhelmed by the world and at last, he perishes in the execution of his revenge. So marvellous is the character of Hamlet is drawn, so a interest which it awakens, that in studying to forget the fundamental idea which drama, the *dénouement* of which, like several members of the *Orestes*, sets the law of retribution, and vindicates the rule of the Divine government.

In the third member of the trilogy, the poet making his drama subservient to objects with the political state of Athens, nevertheless dedicates these local interests to the expositive truth. Among these political objects the most important was the defence of the Areopagus, the tribunal which was threatened by the growing ascendancy of democracy. It would be difficult to imagine a more impressive means of recommending this to the reverence of the Athenians than thus to the celestial powers as assisting at its inauguration. Of far higher significance, however, is the conception which underlies the drama. The *Erinyes* in Greek has been defined to mean "the



of deep offence, of bitter displeasure, when sacred rights belonging to us are impiously violated by persons who ought most to have respected them." These vengeance-prompting feelings, personified as active, over-wakeful spirits, became associated with the great nature-power, Demeter, under her more malignant aspect, and hence arose the worship of the dread goddess, Demeter Erinya. Both these names have been traced back to the Sanscrit; the Greek Demeter being identified with Dyāvi Mātṛ, the Mother, corresponding to Dyans Pitar, the Father, and the Erinyes being identified with the Sanscrit Saranyū. Thus it appears that the venerable goddesses, like Zeus and Athena, have their root in the Vedas. "In early Greek mythology they were attributed more especially to the Father, the Mother, and the Elder Brother, whenever their sacred rights had been impiously violated." They are thus introduced in the *Iliad* (ix. 449; ix. 572; xv. 204), where they are represented as avenging any violation of the natural order.

In this character they also appear at the conclusion of the *Choephoroi*, and in the opening scenes of the *Eumenides*, where, like blood-thirsty hounds, they pursue Orestes for the murder of his mother: they take cognizance only of the outward act, and exercise their functions with the inflexibility of natural law. They would not the less have claimed him as their prey had he left unavenged the murder of his father (*Choeph.* 283, 911). In this fatal collision Athena appears as umpire: by establishing the court of

Areopagus she proclaims the great principle, "that the highest tribunal upon earth is the collective conscience of humanity."* The cause is tried before this august assembly; righteous regard is had for the special circumstances of the deed; Orestes is acquitted, the sanctity of the primeval goddesses is recognized, their wrath is appeased, and thus the intuitive thirst for revenge is transmuted into the principle of eternal justice. Thus the drama of the *Eumenides* exhibits under one of its grandest phases, the contest between the Titans and the Olympian gods, issuing in the triumph of free will and moral power over blind instinct and necessity, while the transmutation of the Erinyes into the Eumenides symbolizes the profound thought that even the instinctive tendencies in human nature are implanted there by its Divine Author, and consequently that man's highest well-being demands not their suppression or annihilation, but their harmonious subordination to the higher faculties of the soul.

Classical poetry affords the true key to classic art; it is, therefore, interesting to turn from the study of *Æschylus* to the contemplation of the Parthenon, where the Athenians behold translated into marble the same profound ideas which the great dramatist has embodied in his immortal works. Thus the sculptural group of the eastern pediment, having reference to the birth of Athena, indicates, by the presence of the Fates and other divine personages, the deep significance attaching

* 'Gott in der Geschichte.' Bunsen.

by the sculptor to the manifestation of Divine Wisdom in the person of the Virgin Goddess; while in the grand composition of the western pediment, which set forth the contention of Poseidon and Athena for supremacy over the country of Attica, we trace, as in the Eumenides, the association of interests purely local and national with truths of higher significance. Thus the contending divinities have been regarded as typifying the antagonism between agricultural and maritime pursuits, which formed one main feature of Athenian life; and also as reflecting the conflicting powers of land and sea, as exhibited in the topography of the interior and the coast.* I doubt not, however, that there rose also before the mental vision of Phidias the grand old allegory of the battle between the Titans and the Gods, which may be regarded as the mythical expression of that eternal struggle between the lower and higher elements of being, of which the drama of the Eumenides affords so impressive and magnificent a symbol: this hypothesis appears the more plausible when we consider the intimate mythological connection which obtained between Poseidon and Demeter-Ereya.

Another most interesting illustration of the intimate association which, in classical times, existed between Poetry and her sister arts is to be found in the paintings of Polygnotus in the Lesche at Delphi, of which

* Explanation of the Groups in the Western Pediment of the Parthenon. 'Classical Museum,' W. Watkiss Lloyd.

a minute description is given by Pausanias, and which have been admirably restored by Fr. and Joh. Riepenhausen.* The first picture exhibits the capture of Ilium, the desecration of her sanctuaries, and bring before the mental eye the outrage committed against Athena in the person of Cassandra, thus setting forth the origin of the disasters which befell the returning armament of the Greeks: it would be impossible for the beholders of this picture not to recall the speech of Clytemnestra in the Agamemnon (320), in which she forcibly describes the contrast between the state of victors and vanquished in the captured city, the desolation of which is touchingly symbolized in the painting by the empty cuirass that lies on the altar at which a child is clinging. The exhibition of the very crimes so earnestly deprecated by the poet (330) prepares the mind for the second picture, exhibiting the descent of Ulysses to Hades, to learn from the prophet the means by which a safe return might be secured. The punishment of the sacrilegious Tityus and the retaliation on the undutiful son, could not fail to suggest to the mind of the spectator those passages of the Eumenides in which the poet, with terrible earnestness, describes the direful fate which in the lower regions is the sure award of filial impiety and sacrilege (260).

The schools of design which are springing up

* On the paintings of Polygnotus in the Lesche at Delphi. 'Classical Museum,' vol. i. W. Watkiss Lloyd.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

WATCHMAN.

CHORUS OF ARGIVE ELDERS.

CLETENESTRA.

THE HERALD TALTHEIUS.

AGAMEMNON.

CASSANDRA.

EGISTHOS.

[SCENE.—The royal palace in Argos, the area in front adorned with statues of the gods. In the foreground an altar of APOLLO. The city, the mountains, and the sea, are seen in the distance over the building. The orchestra represents the agora of the city, and is adorned with statues of ZEUS, of APOLLO, of HERMES, and of other gods and heroes.]

AGAMEMNON.

[The WATCHMAN is discovered reclining on the steps of the palace.]

WATCHMAN.

I PRAY the gods deliv'rance from these to
This year-long watch, which, prone on At
With head ensconced in arm, dog-like, I keep
Marking the confluence of nightly stars;
And those bright potentates who bring to me
Winter and summer, signal in the sky,
†Both in their wane I view and when they rise
And for the beacon's token now I watch,
The blaze of fire, bearing from Troy a tale,
†Tidings of capture; for so proudly hopes
A woman's heart, with manly counsel fraught
Dew-drenched and restless is my nightly cou
By dreams unvisited, for at my side,
In place of Sleep stands Fear, forbidding me,

* The figures correspond to the number of lines in the original.

† The obelisks refer to the conjectural emendations of the text at the end of each drama.

Save in unquiet rest, my lids to close.
 Then when I think to chant a strain, or whistle,
 (Such against sleep my tuneful counter-charm,)
 Moaning, I wail the sorrows of this house,
 Not wisely governed as in days of old.

[He suddenly beholds the beacon-light and starts to his feet.]

But now, glad respite from these toils be mine, 20
 Since fire, joy's herald, through the darkness gleams.
 Hail lamp of night, forth shining like the day,
 Of many a festive dance in Argos' land,
 Through joy at this event, the harbinger.

Hurrah! Hurrah! To Agamemnon's queen,
 Thus with shrill cry I give th' appointed sign,
 That from her couch up-rising with all speed,
 She in the palace jubilant may lift
 The joyous shout, to gratulate this torch,
 If Iliou's citadel in truth is ta'en,
 As, shining forth, this beacon-fire proclaims. 30

The joyous prelude I myself will dance,
 For I shall score good fortune to my lords,
 Now that this torch hath cast me triple six.
 Well! be it mine, when comes this mansion's lord,
 With this my hand his much-loved hand to grasp!

The rest I speak not; o'er my tongue hath passed
 An ox with heavy tread: the house itself,
 Had it a voice, would tell the tale full clear;
 And I, with those who know, am fain to speak,
 With others, who know nothing, I forgot.

[Exit.

[Enter in rank and file the Chorus of ARGIVE ELDERS, each leaning on his staff; during their slow and measured advances they sing the following ode, the conclusion of which brings them in front of the stage.]

Chorus.

Lo the tenth year rolls apace 40
 Since Priam's mighty challenger,
 Lord Menelas and Atreus' heir,
 Stalwart Atride,—by heaven's grace
 Twin-throned, twin-sceptered,—o'er the sea
 Steered hence the Argive chivalry,
 Whose warrior crews a thousand galleys bare.

Fierce battle changed they from their breast,
 Like vultures which, through paths of air,
 Scream, wheeling o'er their empty nest,
 By oarage of strong pennons driven, 50
 Missing the cyrie-watching care
 Of callow fledglings; but from heaven,
 Apollo, Pan, or Zeus doth lend
 An ear attentive to the cry,
 Shrill-voiced, of birds who share their sky,
 And doth upon the guilty send
 Erinyes, late-avenging pest.

And so for her, by many wooed,
 Doth mighty Zeus, who shields the guest,
 'Gainst Paris send th' Atridan brood; 60
 Struggles limb-wearing, knees earth-pressed,

The spear-shaft, rudely snapt in twain
 In war's initial battle,—these
 Alike for Greeks and Trojans ho decrees.
 As matters stand, they stand; the yot to be
 Must issue as ordained by destiny,
 For neither tears nor lustral rain,
 The wrath relentless can appease
 Of violated sanctities.

70

But we, unhonoured, age-oppressed,
 In that array uncounted, rest
 Upon these staves our child-like frame;
 In childhood and in age, the same.
 Life's current feebly sways the breast.
 His station Ares holds no more,
 Decrepit Eld, like phantom of the day,
 Powerless as infancy, with leafage hoar,
 Treeds his three-footed way.

80

[During the foregoing Ode, a female train bearing sacred vessels issues from the palace; CLYTEMNESTRA appears to offer sacrifice. The stage and orchestra exhibit the spectacle of altars blazing with flames fed with oil. The Chorus sings the following Ode as it advances to take up its usual position round the altar of Zeus, adorned with a statue of the god.]

But royal Clytemnestra, thou
 Tyndareus' daughter, what hast heard,
 Confiding in what tidings now
 Sendest thou round the altar-kindling word?
 Of all the gods who guard the state,
 Olympian, or of realms below,

Gods of the field, or on the mart who wait,
 With gifts the altars glow.

90

Now here, now there, bright flames arise,
 Streaming aloft to reach the skies,
 Charmed with pure unguent's soothing spell,
 Guileless and suasive, from the royal cell.

What here 'tis lawful to declare,
 What may be told proclaim;
 Be healer of this care
 Which now a lowering form doth wear,
 Till fawning Hope, from out the flame
 Of sacrifice, with gentle smile
 Doth satiateless grief's soul-gnawing pang beguile.

100

[While CLYTEMNESTRA offers sacrifice, the following Ode is sung by the Chorus from the altar of Zeus.]

STROPHE.

The way-side augury 'tis mine to sing.*
 Of mighty men the doom fore-shadowing,
 (For Heaven itself doth prompt my waning powers,
 And with persuasive song the old man dowers.)
 How the rapacious bird, the feathered king,
 Sends forth against the Teucid land,
 With spear and with avenging hand,
 Achæa's double-throned Might,
 Neath whose joint sceptre Hellas' sons unite.

110

* The original being here in oracular style is purposely obscure, and cannot be fitly rendered otherwise in the translation.

Toward spear-poising hand, the palace near,
On lofty station, manifest to sight,
The bird-kings to the navy-kings appear,
One black, and one with hinder plumage white;
A hare with ombryo young, in evil hour,
Amereod of future courses, they devour.

Chant the dirge, uplift the wail!

But may the right prevail!

120

ANTISTROPHE.

Then the sagacious army-scor, aware
How diverse-minded the Atridan kings,
In the hare-renders sees the martial pair,
And thus, the angury expounding, sings;—
“Priam's stronghold in time this martial raid
Captures, but first the city's store,
The people's wealth, shall fate destroy;
Now from no god may jealous ire
O'ercloud the mighty curb forged against Troy,* 130
Marshall'd for battle; for the holy Maid
Is angered at the house, since of her sire
The wing'd hounds the wretched trembler tare,
Mother and young unborn, her special care;
Therefore doth she the eagles' meal abhor.

Chant the dirge, uplift the wail!

But may the right prevail!

EPODE.

†“So dear to Artemis the tiny brood

* By a harsh metaphor the Greek army is called a curb
forged against Troy.

Of all wild things that love the tent,
Whether of gentle or of savage mood!
Therefore the prophet doth of Heaven entreat 140
From these events fair omens to fulfil;
Judging the portents by the army view'd
Partly auspicious, partly fraught with ill.
†But, God of healing! thee I supplicate,
Let not the Huntress on the Danaï bring
Dire ship-detaining blasts and adverse skies,
Preluding other sacrifice,
Lawless, unfestive, natal spring
Of feudful jar and mortal hate,
By husband-fear unawed;
For child-avenging wrath, with fear and fraud,
Direal palace-warden, doth untiring wait.” 150

Such woes, with high successes blent,
By Fate on the twain royal houses sent,
Did Calchas from the way-side auguries
Bodeful proclaim:—Then consonant with these,
Chant the dirge, uplift the wail!
But may the right prevail!

STROPHE I.

Zeus, whoe'er he be, this name
If it pleaseth him to claim,
This to him will I address;
Weighing all, no power I know
Save only Zeus, if I in sooth would throw 160
Aside this groundless burthen of distress.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Nor doth he so great of yore,*
 With all-defying boldness rise,
 †Longer avail; his reign is o'er.
 The next, thrice vanquished in the strife,
 Hath also passed; but who the victor-strain
 To Zeus uplifts, true wisdom shall obtain.

STROPHE II.

To sober thought Zeus paves the way, 170
 And wisdom links with pain.

In sleep the anguish of remembered ill
 Drops on the troubled heart; against their will
 Rebellious men are tutored to be wise;
 †A grace I ween of the divinities,
 Who mortals from their holy seats arraign.

ANTISTROPHE II.

E'en so the elder of the twain,
 Achaia's fleet who swayed,
 No scer upbraiding, bowed, with grief suppressed,
 His soul to fortune's stroke; what time the host,
 In front of Chalcis, tossing off the coast 180
 Of wave-vexed Aulis, lingered, sore-distressed,
 While store-exhausting gales their progress stayed.

STROPHE III.

Blasts, fraught with hunger and delay
 And evil-anchorage, from Strymon sweep,—
 Ruin to mortals; with malignant power,
 Ruthless to ships and cordage, they

* The combatants probably are Uranos, father of Kronos;
 and Kronos, father of Zeus.

Doubling the sojourn on the deep
 Wither the Grecian flower. 190
 But for the bitter tempest, when the scer
 Another remedy pealed forth more drear,
 Invoking Artemis; the Atridan twain,
 Smiting on earth their sceptres, strove in vain
 To quell the rising tear.

ANTISTROPHE III.

Then thus the elder chieftain cried:—
 "Grievous, in sooth, the doom to disobey,
 But grievous too if I my child must slay, 200
 My home's fair ornament, my pride,
 Defiling these paternal hands,

The sacred altar near,
 With streams of virgin gore. Oh choice severe!
 The fleet can I desert, the leaguéd bands
 Failing? With hot desire to crave the spell
 Of virgin blood, the storm that shall allay,
 Is just. May all be well!" 210

STROPHE IV.

Then harnessed in Necessity's stern yoke
 An impious change-wind in his bosom woke,
 Profane, unhallowed, with dire evil fraught,
 His soul perverting to all daring thought.
 For frenzy, that from primal woo doth spring,
 Emboldens mortals, prompting deeds of ill;
 Thus, armed a woman to avenge, the king
 In sacrifice his daughter dared to kill;
 The fleet's initial rite accomplishing.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

Her prayers, her cries of "Father," her young life 220
 Were nought to those stern umpires, breathing strife:
 So, after prayer, her sire the servants bade,
 †Stooping, with stoold hearts, to lift the maid
 Robo-tangled, and like kid for sacrifice,
 To raise high o'er the altar; and lest cries
 Should 'scape her lovely lips, or sound of pain
 Ill-omened to the house, he bade restrain
 Her mouth's fair portal with a forceful rein.

STROPHE V.

Then letting fall her veil of saffron dye, 230
 She smote, with glances from her tearful eye,
 Each murderer; while, passing fair,
 †Like to a pictured image, voiceless there,
 Strove she to speak; for oft in other days,
 She in her father's hospitable halls,
 With her elaste voice had carolled forth his praise,
 What time the walls
 Rang to the P'an's sound,
 Gracing her sire, with third libation crowned.

ANTISTROPHE V.

What next befel I know not, nor relate;
 Not unfulfill'd were Calchas' words of fate. 240
 For justice doth for sufferers ordain
 To purchase wisdom at the cost of pain.
 Why seek to read the future? Let it go!
 Since dawns the issue clear with dawning day,

Chorus.

Of these great tidings what the certain proof?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Warrant I have;—how not? or Heaven deceives me.

Chorus.

Trusting the suasive augury of dreams?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

The fancies of the sleep-bound soul I heed not.

Chorus.

But hath some wingless rumour buoy'd thee up?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Thou chidest me as were I a young girl.

Chorus.

But since what time was Priam's city spoiled?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

This very night now bringing forth the day.

270

Chorus.

What messenger could travel with such speed?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Hephaestus, sending forth Idaian fire.
Hither through swift relays of courier-flame,
Beacon transmitted beacon. Ida first
To the Hermæan rock on Lemnos' Isle;
Thence Athos' summit, dedicate to Zeus,

The third in order, caught the mighty glow.
Towering aloft, the pino-blaze, like the sun,
†Gold-beaming, bridging in its might the sea,
Transmits the splendour of the advancing fire
To bold Macistos' watch-tow'rs; he in turn,
Without delay, nor overpowered by sleep,
The courier's duty faithfully discharged.
The torch, far-gleaming to Enripus' stream,
Gives signal to Messapios' sentinels.
Firing of withered heath a giant pile,
They kindle and send on the courier-light.
The stalwart flame, unwearied and undim'd,
Like a bright moon, o'erleaps Asopos' plain,
And wakens, on Cithæron's lofty crag,
Another speeder of the fiery post.
The warder hailing the far-journeying fire,
Kindles a beacon of surpassing glow;
Bounded the radiance o'er Gorgopis' lake,
And reaching Aegiplanetos' mountain peak
Urged on without delay the fiery chain.
With vigour unimpaired they onward send,
Kindled anew, a mighty beard of flame,
That, flaring from afar, the headland crossed
†O'erlooking Saron's gulf. Down shooting then,
The blaze, alighting on Arachnæ's height,
The city's nearest watch-tower, reached its goal.
Thence to the roof of Atreus' son this light
Darted,—true scion of Idaian fire.
Thus in succession, flame awakening flame
Fulfilled the order of the fiery course:

The first and last are victors in the race.
Such is the proof, the warrant that I give
Of tidings sent me by my Lord from Troy.

Chorus.

The gods, O queen, will I invoke hereafter.
But now I fain would marvel at thy words,
Hear'd more at large so thou wouldst speak again. 310

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Troy on this very day th' Achaians hold.
I woen ill-blending clamour fills the town :
Pour in one vessel vinegar and oil,
They will not lovingly consort, I trow ;
So now from captives and from captors rise
Two voices, tolling of their two-fold fate.
For *these*, prone falling on the lifeless forms
Of brothers and of aged fathers, wail,
With neck no longer free, their loved ones' death ; 320
While *these*, night-stragglers after toilsome fight,
Keen for all viands that the city yields,
Upon no order standing, but as each
Hath snatched the lot of fortune, take their fill.
At length from frost and skiey dews set free,
They dwell in Ilion's spear-won halls, and sleep
† The live-long night, unscintillated like gods.
If now the tutelary powers they fear,
Who hold the conquered land, and spare their
shrines, 330
The victors shall not vanquished be in turn.
But may no greedy passion seize the host

To covet things unlawful, smit with gain.
A safe return has yet to be secured,
And half the double course is yet to run.
But if in sacrilege the host return,
Wakeful may rise the sorrows of the slain
For vengeance, though no sudden ill befall.
'These words from me, a woman thou hast heard ;
But may the good in overpoise prevail ! 340
For with rich offerings have I won this joy.

Chorus.

Like prudent man well hast thou spoken, lady.—
But now that I thy certain proofs have heard,
Duly I turn me to invoke the gods,
For no unworthy meed requites our toil.

[Exit CLYTEMNESTRA.]

Hail, sovereign Zeus, and friendly Night,
Mistress of mighty glories, Hail !
Hurled is the net o'er Troia's height,
That neither age nor youth avail 350
To overleap ; in hopeless thrall
Vast ruin captures all.
Great guardian of the guest,
Thee I adore ;—
Wrought were those deeds at thy behest :
The bow thou didst of yore
'Gainst Alexander strain,
That nor the destined hour before,
Nor shooting o'er the stars, in vain
The shaft might fall.

STASIMON II.

Bequeathing to her people deadly stour
Of shielded hosts, of spears, and ships' array,
And Ilium's ruin bearing as her dower,
She through the portal swiftly took her way,
Daring what none may dare ;—with many a wail.
The palace seers peal'd forth the tale.

" Alas the royal line, the princely house! 100
Alas the couch,—the trace of her once true!"
Dishonoured, yet without rebuke, the spouse
Stands speechless, yearning still her form to view
Lost o'er the far sea-wave: his dreamy pain
Conjures her phantom in his home to reign.

He leathes the sculptor's plastic skill

Which living grace befits;

Not Aphrodite's self can still

The hunger of his eyes.

ANTISTROPHE II.

And dreamy fancies, coinage of the brain, 110
Come o'er the troubled heart with vain delight;
For vain the rapture, the illusion vain,
When forms beloved in visions of the night,
With changeful aspect, mock our grasp, and sweep
On noiseless wing adown the paths of sleep.
Such sorrows o'er the hearth brood evermore.
And woes o'ertowering these. The warrior train
Comrades in danger, steered from Hellas' shore,
Leaving in Hellas' homes heart-withering pain;

Full many sorrows rankle at the core. 420
 Those whom he sent each holds in ken,
 But to their homes return
 Armour and in the funeral urn,
 Ashes instead of men.

STROPHE III.

For Ares, bartering for gold
The flesh of men, the scales doth hold
 In battle of the spear.
From Ilion, back to sorrowing friends,
Rich dust, fire-purified, he sends,
 Wash'd with full many a tear.
No living warriors greet them, but instead
Urns filled with ashes smoothly spread. 430
Groaning, each hero's praise they tell;
 How *this* excelled in martial strife;
And that in fields of carnage fell,
 Right nobly for another's wife.
Breathing such murmurs, jealous hate
Doth on the Atridan champions wait.
Achaians, cast in fairest mould,
Ensepulchred 'neath Ilion's wall,
The foughten shore now firmly hold, 440
 The hostile sod their pall.

ANTISTROPHE III.

Direful the people's voice, to hate
Assumed, which worketh soon or late
 As ban of public doom.

Now o'er my spirit anxious fear
 Broodeth, lest tidings I should hear
 That night still shrouds in gloom;

For blind to deeds of blood the gods are not.
 In Time the swarthy brood of Night
 With slow eclipse reverse his lot,
 Who Fortune reareth in despite
 Of Justice. Rest of succour lies 450
 The wretch once prone. Excessive praise
 Is hateful ever; 'gainst men's eyes
 Zeus hurls his blinding rays.
 But may ungrudged success be mine!
 No city-spoiler let me be!
 Nor, subject to another, pine
 Myself in slavery.

ERODE.

Borne by the joy-announcing flame
Swift through the town the tidings fly; 460
But whether true who may proclaim,
 Or not a heavenly lie?
For who so childish, so distraught,
 To warn his spirit at the beacon's glow,
 When other news, with evil fraught,
 His joy may change to woe?
'Tis woman's way the boon, ere seen, to prize;
Too credulous, her fancy open lies
 To rumour's rapid inroad, but the same 470
 Published by women quickly dies.

HERALD.

So please the gods, I grudge not now to die.

Chorus.

Love for thy native land hath tried thy heart?

HERALD.

So tried that from mine eyes fall tears of joy.

Chorus.

Sweet the heart-sickness that o'ercame you thus.

HERALD.

The key I lack which may thy words unlock.

Chorus.

Smit with desire for those who longed for you.

HERALD.

Hath Argos then yearned for the yearning host?

Chorus.

Ay, so that oft from darken'd soul I groan'd.

HERALD.

Whence this sad gloom, abhorrent to the host? 530

Chorus.

Silence I long have held bale's safest cure.

HERALD.

How! Aught didst fear in absence of thy lords?

Chorus.

To die was oft my wish as whilom thine.

HERALD.

Well ended, all is well. In lapse of time
 Happy and adverse lot must intermix,
 For who, save gods, may boast of lengthen'd years
 Free from disastrous chance? Were I to tell
 The toils and sorry lodging of the ship,
 Whence seldom landing, wretched was our couch,
 †What hour exempt from service and from groans? 540
 Yet life to us on shore more hateful still;
 For close to hostile wall our beds were strewn.
 Dank vapours drizzled from the meads and sky,
 Our raiment's canker, tricking us as beasts
 With shaggy hair;—or were I to describe
 Bird-killing Winter's over-matching cold,
 From snows of Ida born, or Summer's heat,
 When, stretched on breathless noon-day couch, the sea
 Slumbered without a wave. But why lament?
 Past is the toil;—past also for the dead, 550
 Who ne'er will trouble them again to rise.
 Why call the spectral army-roll? and why,
 Living, bemoan reverses? Nay, I claim
 With many a farewell to salute mischance.
 For us, the remnant of the Argive host,
 Joy triumphs, nor can Sorrow tilt the scale.
 Winging o'er land and sea our homeward flight,
 We to the sun-light well may make this boast,
 "The Argive host, captors at length of Troy, 560
 These spoils, an off'ring to Achaia's gods,
 Hang up, bright glory of their ancient shrines."
 Whoso the tidings hears must needs extol

The leaders and the state; praise too shall greet
Zeus' consummating grace. My tale is told.

Chorus.

Ungrudging surrender yield I to thy words.
Age still is young enough for grateful lore.
But Atreus' halls and Clytemnestra most
These news concern; me also they enrich.

[*Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.*]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Long since the shout of jubilee I raised, 570
When first by night the fiery herald came,
Telling of Ilium captured and o'erthrown.
Who was it then that taunting asked, "Dost think,
Trusting the beacon-light, that Troy is sacked?
'Tis woman's way to be elate of heart."
By such bold utterance was my wit misprised:
Yet still I sacrificed: and through the town
With woman's note they tuned the joyous trill,
Paeans uplifting in the gods' abodes,
The while the fragrant incense-flames expired. 580
And now, what need that thou shouldst tell me more?
I from the king himself the tale shall hear.
Myself will hasten now to welcome home,
With honour due, my venerated lord;
What sight for woman sweeter than the day
Which to her spouse, Heaven-shielded from the fight,
Throws wide the gates? Then hither bid my lord,
Beloved of Argos, to return with speed.

Arriving, he will find a faithful wife,
Such as he left her, watch-dog of his house, 590
To him devoted, hostile to his foes,
In all points like herself, no single seal
Through these long years invaded by her hand.
Pleasure, or blameful word from other man,
Foreign to me as dyer's hue to brass.
A boast like this, fraught as it is with truth,
The lip misseems not of a high-born dame.

[*Exit CLYTEMNESTRA.*]

Chorus.

Behold! The queen herself hath tutored thee;
Decorous words her clear interpreters.
But tell me, Herald, touching Menelaus, 600
Doth he in safety homeward with the host
Hither return, prince to his country dear?

HERALD.

False news were I to tell, in flatt'ring terms,
Not long would friends enjoy the fair deceit.

Chorus.

Mightest thou speak auspicious words yet true?
That here they sundered are is all too plain.

HERALD.

The man is vanished from th' Achaian host;
Himself and galley. No untruth I tell.

Chorus.

Steering ahead from Troy? or hath a storm,
A common terror, snatched him from the host? 610

HERALD.

Like skilful archer thou hast hit the mark;
And hast in brief a mighty woe declared.

Chorus.

Say, doth the voice of other mariners
Report of him as living, or as dead?

HERALD.

Not one so knoweth as to speak his doom,
Save the bright Sun, feeder of teeming earth.

Chorus.

How! Burst the tempest on the naval host
Through anger of the gods? say, what the end?

HERALD.

Auspicious day with ill announcing tongue
Decemeth not to mar. To gods diverse 620
Honours at diverse time be duly paid.
When messenger, sad-visaged, tidings dire
Of routed armies to the city bears,
A common wound inflicting on the state,
While many men from many homes are banded,
Smit by the twofold scourge which Ares loves,
Twin-speared Calamity, a gory pair:—
Whoso is laden with such woes as these
The pain of the Furies well may raise.
But coming to a town in jubilee, 630
Glad messenger of safety and success,
How shall I tidings mingle fair and foul,

Agamemnon.

Zeus, not willing yet the race to whelm,
Good hope there is that he may yet return.
Hearing this tale, know, thou the truth hast heard.

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Who, oh who, with truest aim,
Did the battle-wedded dame,
Prize of conflict, Helen name?
Haply some prescient power, from gaze
Of man concealed, the tongue who sways. 670
Helen, the captor; forth who sped
Captor of ships, of cities, and of men.
From dainty curtained bower she fled,
While Titan zephyr swelled her sail;
Swift on their quarry's viewless trail
Sailed many a shielded hunter, when,
Armed in a quarrel red with gore,
Their barks they steered to Simois' leafy shore 680

ANTISTROPHE I.

Wrath, with direful issue fraught,
Thus to hapless Ilion brought
Dear alliance, dearly bought:
Requiter of the board profaned,
And hearth-protecting Zeus disclaimed;
Late vengeance wreaking on the throng,
Bold choristers of hymeneal song,
Loudly who hymned their fateful strain.
But now shall Priam's city hoar, 690
That song unlearning, groan amain;

Agamemnon.

31

Calling on Paris' bridal bed
Disastrous, she lamenteth sore,
With many tears, her sons to slaughter led.

STROPHE II.

So once did wight incautions rear
A suckling lion, for the breast
Still yearning, to the house a pest.
Tame in life's early morning, dear 700
To childhood, and by Eld caressed.
Carried full oft in fondling play,
Like to a babe in arms he lay;
The hand with winning glances wooed,
And, smit with pangs of hunger, fawned for food.

ANTISTROPHE II.

But time the temper doth bewray
Inherent in his race. Due need
Of gentle nurture to repay,
Reending the flocks with cruel greed,
Unbidden he prepares the feast, 710
And mars with gory stain the halls.
Resistless, dire, athirst for prey,
The pest the menial train appals,
Beared for the house by Heaven, fell Atë's priest.

STROPHE III.

So came to Troia's walls, in evil hour,
Spirit of breathless calm, fair pride
Of riches, love's soul-piercing flower, 720
The eyes' soft dart; but from her course aside

Swerving, to woe-lock bitter end she wrought.
 To Priam's offspring came she, mischief fraught,
 Evil companion, bringing evil dower.
 By Zeus escorted, guardian of the guest,
 She sped, dire Fury, bridal post.

ANTISTROPHE III.

Lives among men this saw, voiced long ago;
 "Success consummate breeds space,
 Nor childless dies, but to the race 730
 From prosperous Fortune springeth cureless Woe."
 Apart I hold my solitary creed.
 Prolific truly is the impious doer;
 Like to the evil stock, the evil seed;
 But fate ordains that righteous homes shall aye
 Rejoice in goodly progeny.

STROPHE IV.

†But ancient outrage, soon or late,
 When strikes the hour ordained by Fate, 740
 New outrage breeds, in human ill
 Wild wantoner for aye, until
 Within the house a second brood,
 Like to the parents, sees the light:—
 Gorged insolence, and (demon unsubdued)
 Boldness, swart Atë's god-defying might.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

But Justice doth the smoky cell
 Illumine with celestial shoon,

And loves with honest worth to dwell;
 Riches amassed with hands unclean 750
 Forsaking with averted eyes,
 To holy Innocence she flies;—
 Wealth she despiseth, falsely stamped with praise,
 And to their fated issue all things sways.

[Enter warriors and captives; at last AGAMEMNON appears, seated on a chariot, with CASSANDRA at his side; soon after CLYTEMNESTRA, accompanied by female attendants, issues from the palace.]

Chorus.

Hail, royal lord! Stormer of Ilion, hail!
 Scion of Atreus! How compose my speech,
 How due obeisance render thee,
 Yet neither overshoot the mark, nor fail
 The goal of fitting compliment to reach? 760
 For many men, transgressing right, there be
 Semblance who place above reality.
 To him who groans beneath affliction's smart,
 All men have prompt condolence; but the sting
 Of feigned sorrow reaches not the heart.
 So men with others' joy rejoicing, bring
 Over their visago an enforced smile:
 But the discerning shepherd knows his flock,
 And his unerring glance detects their guile,
 Who simulating love, with glozing art 770
 And watery kindness fawn, but inly mock.
 But thou, O King, (I speak without disguise,)

In Helen's quarrel busking war's array,
 A mien didst wear unseemly in mine eyes,
 The rudder of thy spirit guiding ill,
 In that thou thoughtest courage to instil
 †In men to death a prey, by sacrifice.
 But now that thou hast wrought the great emprise,
 Not from the surface of my mind alone,
 Nor with unfriendly thought, thy toil I own;—
 And inquest made, in time shall it be known, 780
 Who of thy citizens at home the while
 Guarded thy state with truth, and who with guile.

AGAMEMNON, *speaking from the chariot.*

First Argos and her tutelary gods,
 Who with me wrought to compass my return,
 And visit Priam's town with vengeance due,
 Justly I hail. For in this cause the gods,
 Swayed by no hearsay, in the bloody urn
 Without dissentient voice the pebbles cast,
 Sealing the doom of Troy: while Hope alone
 Drow near the other urn, by no hand filled. 790
 The rising smoke still shows the city's fall;
 Still live the storms of Ruin, still uprise
 From dying embers the rich fumes of wealth.
 Therefore behoves to render to the gods
 Memorial thanks; for the atrocious rape
 We have avenged, and in a woman's cause
 The Argive monster, offspring of the horse,
 Host shield-accounted, made its deadly leap,
 And Priam's city levelled to the dust,

What time the Ploïades in ocean waned;
 So, bounding o'er the towers, of princely blood 800
 The raw-devouring lion lapped his fill.
 This lengthened prelude to the gods! and now
 Weighing the judgment ye awhile expressed,
 I say the same, and am with you agreed.
 To few is it congenial, envy-free,
 To venerate the friend whom Fortune crowns.
 The jealous poison, lodged within the heart,
 Tortures with twofold pang whom it infects.
 By his own griefs oppressed, the envious man
 Groans also to behold another's joy. 810
 Out of my proof I speak, for, well I wot,
 Who friendship most pretended, only wore
 Its mirrored image, shadow of a shade.
 None but Ulysses, who unwilling sailed,
 Once harnessed, was my trusty yoke-fellow.
 This I affirm, be he alive or dead.
 But for the rest, what to the state pertains,
 And to the gods, a full assembly called,
 We'll weigh in free debate. Counsel we need,
 That where the state is sound, we keep it so; 820
 But where disease the healer's art requires,
 By kind excision, or by cantery,
 We shall attempt to remedy the harm.
 Now to my palace and my household hearth
 Returning, first will I the gods salute,
 Who forward sped me, and who lead me home;
 And now since victory hath followed me,
 Here may she henceforth steadfastly abide!

CLITEMNESTRA.

Men, citizens, ye elders of our state,
 I blush not in your presence to proclaim
 My wifely tenderness; for bashful Fear 830
 In time from mortals dies. I will rehearse
 (Not from another's hearsay) the sad life
 'Twas mine to lead while this man was at Troy.
 First, for a woman severed from her mate
 To sit forlorn at home, her ear assailed
 By direful rumours, is a grievous woe.
 One courier comes, another in his train
 Worse tidings brings to echo through the house;
 And as for wounds, had my dear lord received
 As many as report kept pouring in, 840
 A net methinks had not been more transpierced.
 But had he died off as reported thou,
 A second triple-bodied Geryon,*
 †A threefold cloak of earth he must have donned,‡
 Enduring death in every form he wore.
 Thus harassed by these ever-rife reports,
 Full often from my neck have forceful hands
 Seized and untied the beam-suspended noose.
 Then too our son stands not beside me now, 850
 The holder of our pledges, mine and thine,
 Orestes, as becooms. Yet marvel not;

* Geryon, a monster represented by the poets as having three bodies and three heads, and located by them in the fabulous island of Erytheia. The capture of the oxen of Geryon was one of the twelve labours of Hercules.

‡ [Πολλὴν ἄνωθεν, τὴν κατὰ γὰρ οὐ λέγω.]

I agree with those critics who reject this line as spurious

For, him thy trusty spear-guest nourisheth;*
 Strophius, the Phocian, who hath me forwarned
 Of twofold peril, thine 'neath Ilion's wall,
 And next lest clamour-fostered Anarchy
 Hazard the plot, as mortals are too prone
 To trample further him already down.
 This pretext, trust me, carries no deceit.
 But for myself the gushing founts of grief 860
 Are all dried up, no single tear is left;
 Sore with late watching are my weary eyes,
 Weeping the fiery beacons set for thee
 Neglected ever. In my dreams I saw,
 Crowded in span so brief, thy countless woes;
 Then, at faint buzzing of the guat, I woke.
 These sorrows past, now with a heart unwrung
 I hail my husband, watchdog of the fold, 870
 Sure forestay of the ship; of lofty roof
 Pillar firm based; Sire's sole-begotten child;
 Land beyond hope looming to mariners;
 Day after storm most brilliant to behold;
 To thirsty wayfarer clear gushing spring.
 Sooth, sweet it is to 'scape from harsh constraint;
 With such addresses do I honour him.
 Let Envy stand aloof! for we have borne
 Ere this full many a woe. Now dear my lord
 Come from thy car; but on the ground, O King,

* Spear-guest. The Greek word *δορυξένος* is explained by Plutarch, whom Bishop Thirlwall follows, as expressing the relation established when a prisoner of war dismissed on parole has honourably paid his ransom.

Chorus.

Follow! She counsels for thy need the best: 1020
Be thou persuaded;—leave thy chariot-seat.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

No leisure have I here before the gates
To linger; for, beside the central hearth,
The victims wait the sacrificial fire;
A favour that our fondest hope transcends.
And thou, if thou wilt share our rite, be quick;—
But if, poor fool, thou canst not catch my word,
In place of voice, speak with barbarian hand.

Chorus.

A clear interpreter the stranger needs:
Distracted she seems, like creature newly caught. 1030

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ay, she is mad; to her distempered thoughts
She listens; from a newly-captured town
She cometh here, nor knows the yoke to bear,
Till quelled in foam the passion of her blood.
But words I'll waste no more, thus to be scorned.
[Exit.

Chorus.

For me, I pity her; I cannot blame;
Come, wretched sufferer, this car forsake;
Yield to necessity, hansom the yoke.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE I.

Ah me! alas! ye gods and earth!
Apollo, O Apollo!

1040

Chorus.

Why raise for Loxias these cries of bale?
Not he the god to heed the mourner's wail.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE I.

Ah me! alas! ye gods and earth!
Apollo! O Apollo!

Chorus.

Once more she calleth with ill-omened cry,
The god who hath no part in misery.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE II.

Apollo, O Apollo!
Thou way-god! my destroyer!
Once more thou hast destroyed me utterly.

Chorus.

She seems about to augur her own ills; 1050
Heaven's breathing o'en in bonds her spirit fills.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE II.

Apollo, O Apollo!
Thou way-god! my destroyer!
Ah, whither hast thou led me? to what roof?

Chorus.

To the Atreidan; an thou dost not know
I tell thee; thou'lt not say it is not so.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE III.

Ah! Ah!

In very sooth a heaven-detested house!
 Privy to halters, and to kindred gore;
 A human shambles with blood-reeking floor. 1060

Chorus.

Keen scented seems the stranger, like a hound;
 Ay, and the blood she's tracking will be found.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE III.

Ah! Ah!

Trust-worthy vouchers have we here!
 These babes, who weep their death-wound, faith inspire,
 Their roasted members eaten by their sire!

Chorus.

Thy fame oracular hath reached our ear;
 But certes we require no prophet here.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE IV.

Ye gods! what crime is hatching? What fell blow
 Mighty and strange? Mischief beneath this roof 1070
 Is plotted; all inenrable the woe,
 To friends unbearable! Help stands aloof.

Chorus.

Dark are these oracles; the first I knew;
 For, then, the city voucheth wholly true.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Ah wretch, the deed wilt dare! with guile

She in the bath her wedded mate doth cheer;
 How speak the end? 'Twill soon be here:
 Hand after hand is lifted; woo the while. 1

Chorus.

* I comprehend her not; this mystic lore,
 These bleared eyes oracles perplex me sore.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE V.

Woe! woe! Look! look! What see I there?
 Is it, ye gods, a net of hell?
 The wife herself, joint-slayer, is the snare.
 Now o'er the accursed rite
 Let the dread brood of Night,
 Ungluttled with the race, their chorus swell!

Chorus. STROPHE VI.

What Fury 'gainst this house doth summon? What
 The shriek to raise? Such utterance cheers me no
 Pallid through every vein 1
 Blood to my heart doth run,
 Which to the battle-slain
 Quencheth life's sun;
 But Ate comes again.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE V.

Hold! hold! Woe! woe! The heifer there
 Keep from the bull. In meshes fell
 Of black-woofed garb entangled,—guileful snare,—
 Catching,—she smites him dead;—
 Prone in his watery bed
 He falls. The lover's guileful doom I tell



Chorus. ANTISTROPHE VI.

I boast not to be skilled in auguries,
 Yet mischief here I cannot but surmise. 1100
 Through spells to man below
 What grateful cheer is sent?
 Their wordy arts from human woe
 Breed dark presentiment.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE VII.

Woe! woe! my wretched ill-starred lot!
 Wailing another's fate mine own I mourn;
 Why hast thou led me hither, all forlorn,
 Unless with thee to perish? Wherefore not?

Chorus. STROPHE VIII.

Thou'rt frenzied, by some god possess'd,
 And tuneless quirest forth thy doom, 1110
 Like nightingale, with dusky plume
 Senseless of song. From heart oppress'd,
 Ceaseless her Itys, Itys, flows,*
 Her life howailing, rich alone in woe.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE VII.

Woe! woe! Clear-voiced bird, arrayed
 In plum'd shape, by powers divine;

* In the Odyssey (xix. 518) Penelope compares herself to Andaros' child, the sylvan nightingale which, in the open spring, perched amid the dense foliage of the trees, warbles beautifully, with frequent change of key, lamenting her boy, her beloved Itylos, son of King Zethus, whom, through insane folly, she had slain. This is the oldest form of the legend.

Sweet life, unmarred by tears, is thine:
 But me awaits the double-edged blade.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE VIII.

Whence hast thou these prophetic throes,
 Rushing athwart thy soul, in vain? 1120
 Why body forth in dismal strain,
 Bleat with shrill cries, these direful woes?
 Whence cometh thus to vex thy soul
 Of prophecy the dark, ill-omened goal?

CASSANDRA. STROPHE IX.

Oh, nuptial rite, oh, nuptial rite,
 Of Paris, fraught with doom!
 Seamaner! whence my fathers drank,
 Nourished of yore upon thy bank,
 I thrive in youthful bloom. 1130
 Me now Coeytos and the streams of night
 To augur on their dismal shores invite.

Chorus. STROPHE X.

What thought hast uttered all too clear:
 An infant might interpret here.
 Smitten within am I with gory sting,
 The while thy bird-like cry to hear
 My heart doth wring.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE IX.

Oh deadly coil, oh, deadly coil
 Of Iliou, doomed to fall!
 Alas, the flower-cropping kine
 Slain by my father at the shrine

While that, in consecrated garb arrayed,
To friends and foes a laughter I became :
Vagrant yclept, poor hunger-stricken wretch,
Like strolling mountebank, I bare it all ;
And now the scer (his vengeance wreaked on me
The scrooss) calls me to this deadly fate.
My father at the altar fell, but me
The slaughter-block awaits, and reeking knife.
Yet not unhonoured of the gods we fall ; 1250
For other champion of our cause shall come,
Seed matricidal, venger of his sire.
The exile, from his native land estranged,
Returns, this vengeance for his friends to crown.
For lo, the gods a mighty oath have sworn,
That his slain father's corpse shall lead him home.
But why, an alien here, pour I my wail ?
When that I first have seen my Ilion fare
As fared it hath, and they who won the town
In sorry plight, through judgment of the gods. 1260
I'll go! I'll do! I will endure to die.
These gates, as gates of Hades, I adjure,
One prayer I offer, "mortal be the stroke;"
Free from convulsive throes, in easy death,
While ebbs my life-blood, may I close mine eyes.

Chorus.

Oh woman, thou most wretched and most wise ;
Lengthy thy speech hath been ; but if thou know'st
Truly thine own sad doom, how walkest thou
Like heaven-led victim, boldly to the altar ?

CASSANDRA.

There's no escape; brief respite, nothing more. 1270

Chorus.

Yet to be last is gain at least of time.

CASSANDRA.

The day is come, small profit were in flight.

Chorus.

Well, patient art thou, and of dauntless mind.

CASSANDRA.

Yet dear to mortals is a glorious death.

Chorus.

None from the fortunate such words may hear.

CASSANDRA.

Alas, my sire, for thee and thy brave sons!

[She suddenly starts back.]

Chorus.

What may this mean? What terror drives thee back?

CASSANDRA.

Faugh! faugh!

Chorus.

Why this disgust, unless some horror scare thee?

CASSANDRA.

Blood-reeking murder breatheth from these halls. 1280

Chorus

'Tis but the scent of victims at the hearth.

CASSANDRA.

Nay, but such breath as issues from a tomb.

Chorus.

No Syrian odour tell'st thou for the house.

CASSANDRA.

Well! I will go, within these palace halls
To wail mine own and Agamemnon's doom.
Enough of life! Strangers! Alas! Alas!
Yet quail I not, as birdé at the brake,
With idle dread; in this my vouchers be
When, in my place, woman for woman dies
And when for man ill-wedded, man shall fall. 1290
Dying, this hospitable grace I crave.

Chorus.

Poor wretch; Thy fateful doom my pity moves.

CASSANDRA.

Once more I fain would speak, but not to pour
Mine own funeral wail; but to the Sun,
Looking my last upon his beams, I pray
That my avengers pay my murderers back,
Requiting me, poor slave, their easy prey.
Alas, for man's estate! If Fortune smile,
A shadow may o'erturn it; should she frown,

Agamemnon.

moistened sponge the picture doth destroy. 1300
 ore than the first this doom my pity moves.
[Exit into the palace.]

Chorus.

With boundless greed elate
 Men clutch the gifts of Fate!
 Where Eury pointeth, no one bars the door
 And cries, "Approach no more."
 So to our king the gods have given
 To capture Troy:—Beloved of Heaven
 Home he returns:—but must he now
 Atone for blood shed long ago,
 And, death with death requiting, bow
 To appease the shades below,— 1310
 What mortal these things hearing prayeth not
 That he were born to senseless lot?

AGAMEMNON.

[In the palace.]

Woe's me! I'm smitten with a deadly blow

Chorus.

i. Hush! Wounded unto death who lifts this cry

AGAMEMNON.

Woe's me! Again! a second time I'm struck.

Chorus. In excitement and dismay.

ii. By the groaning of the monarch
 Wrought methinks is now the deed.

iii. But together taking counsel,
 Weave we now some prudent scheme.

Agamemnon.

58

iv. I advise to call the townsfolk
 Hither to the house for help. 1320

v. Rather let us enter quickly,—
 By the newly dripping weapon
 To bring home this shameless deed.

vi. I, assenting, vote for action,
 For the time brooks no delay.

vii. That is certain, for these preludes
 Threaten bondage to the State.

viii. Ay! we linger;—thoughts of dalliance
 Underneath their feet they trample,
 Neither sleep they at their task.

ix. What to counsel here I know not;—
 'Gainst the guilty we must plot. 1330

x. So deem I, since words are futile,
 To restore the dead to life.

xi. Shall we life endure 'neath rulers
 Who these halls have fill'd with shame?

xii. Past endurance! Milder doom were
 Death than bear the tyrant's yoke.

xiii. From these outeries may we augur
 Surely that the man is dead?

xiv. We must know ere we can argue;
 Knowledge differs from surmise. 1340

xv. I too vote that we discover
 Plainly how Atrides fares.

[*The doors of the royal palace are thrown open; CLYTEMNESTRA is discovered standing with the axe over her shoulder. Deceased her, under a cover, are the bodies of AGAMEMNON and CASSANDRA.*]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Though much to suit the times before was said,
It shames me not the opposite to speak :
For, plotting against foes,—our seeming friends,—
How else contrive with Ruin's wily snare,
Too high to overleap, to fence them round ?
Now unto me hath come, not unforeseen,
Though late, the crisis of an ancient fowl.
The deed achieved, here stand I, where I slow. 1350
So was it wrought (and this I'll not deny),
That he could neither 'scape, nor ward his doom ;
A cunning net, meshed tightly, as for fish,
The garment's deadly splendour, round I cast,—
Him twice I smote,—twice groaning prone he fell,
With limbs relaxed ;—then, prostrate where he lay,
Him with third blow I dowered, votive gift
To Hades, guardian of the dead below.
Thus as he fell he chafed his soul away ;
And, from the wound while deadly murder throbs, 1360
With black and gory dew he smiteth me,
Not less exultant than, in heaven-scent joy
The corn-sown land, in birth-hour of the ear.
For this great issue, Argive Senators,
Joy ye, if joy ye can, but I exult.
Nay, o'er the slain were offerings moot,—with right
Here were they poured,—with emphasis of right.

Who with so many a cursèd ill the bowl
At home had filled, himself to drain it comes.

Chorus.

We marvel at thy tongue, how bold thy speech, 1370
Who makest so thy vaunt, woman o'er man.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

As witless woman are ye proving me ;
But I with steadfast heart, to you who know,
Proclaim,—and whether ye will praise or blame,
It recks me not,—this man is Agamemnon,—
My husband, but a corpse, of this right hand
The righteous handiwork ;—so stands the case.

Chorus. STROPHE.

What mischief, O woman, what earth-nurtured bane
Hast tasted, what draught from the sea's briny
deep, 1380
That curses, folk-muttered, of loathing and hate,
Like incense of death on thy head thou dost heap ?
Sheer hast thou smitten, and sheer hast thou slain,
So outlawed be thou from the State!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Me thou dost doom to exile,—to endure
The people's hate, their curse deep-muttered,—thou,
Who 'gainst this man of yore had naught to urge.
He, all unmoved, as though brute life he quenched,
The while his floecy pastures toom'd with flocks,

His own child slaughtered;—charm for Thracian
blasts; 1390

Of all my travail-throes to me most dear.
Him shouldst thou not have chased from land and home,
Just guerdon for foul deed? Stern judge thou art
When me thou dost arraign;—but, mark my words,
(Nerved as I am to threat on equal terms,
If with strong hand ye conquer me, then rule;—
But if high Heaven decree the opposite,
Though late, shall ye to sober sense be schooled.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE.

Oh haughty of spirit, thy boasting is high;—
'Neath blood-reeking Fortune, as raveth thy mind, 1400
E'en so on thy forehead glares forth to the sight
The red clot of blood that for vengeance doth cry.—
Reft of thy friends thou hereafter shalt find
That death-blow shall death-blow requite.

CLATEMNESTRA.

Now hearken ye to this my solemn oath;—
By the accomplished vengeance of my child,
By Até, by Erinyes, unto whom
I slew this man,—Expectancy for me
Treads not the halls of Fear, while on my hearth, 1410
Ægisthos, kind as heretofore, burns fire;—
For he of boldness is no puny shield.
There lies the outrager of me, his wife,
Minion to each Chryseis under Troy.

Agamemnon.

Here too his captive, dream interpreter,
His prophetess, and faithful concubine,
At sea who shared with him the sailor's bench
Not unrequited have they wrought, for lo,
Prone lieth he, and she, his paramour,
Having in swanlike fashion breathed her last,
Her dying wail, lies there, and by her death
With keenor relish crowns my nuptial bliss.

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Oh might some sudden Fato
Not tethered to a weight
Of couch-enchaining anguish, hither waft
The boon of endless sleep!
For our most gracious guardian slain we weep
In woman's cause of yore
Full many a pang who bore,
And now lies smitten by a woman's craft.

STROPHE II.

Woe! frenzied Helen, woe!
Through thee alone, through one,
What numbers, yea, what numbers were undone
What havoc dire 'neath Ilion thou hast wrought
• • • • •

STROPHE III.

And now blood's heirloom, Strife,
Quenching a husband's life,
Through thee hath blossomed, with new murder

Agamemnon.

CLYTEMNESTRA. STROPHE IV.

Dowed beneath sorrow's weight,
Invoke not deadly Fate,
In thine anger Helen thus arraign,
As though through her, through one,
Fell many a Danaan son;—
Man-destroyer, working cureless bane!

1440

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

Demon, who now dost fall
Ruthless on Atreus' hall
Being the twin Tantalide thy prey,
†Through women's haughty reign,
Tearing my heart, thou dost confirm thy sway.
Like bodeful raven hoarse,
She standeth o'er the corpse,
And chants exulting her discordant strain.

1450

CLYTEMNESTRA. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Ay now thy speech in sooth
Runs even with the truth,
Calling the thrice-dread demon of this race;
For in their veins is nursed,
By him, the quenchless thirst
For blood; ere pales the trace
Of ancient gore, now murder flows apace.

Chorus. STROPHE V.

Mighty the demon, dire his hate,
Whom here thou boastest to preside;

Agamemnon.

Alas! ill-omened praise of Fate,
Baneful and still unsatisfied!
Alas! 'Tis Zeus, in will, in deed,
Solo cause, sole fashioner; for say
What comes to mortals undecreed
By Zeus, what here, that owneth not his sway?

1460

STROPHE VI.

Woe! woe!

My king! my king! how weep thy death?
How voice my heart-felt grief? Thou liest there
Entangled in the spider's guileful snare;
In impious toils, thou gaspest forth thy breath.

1470

STROPHE VII.

Woe! woe! To death betrayed,
Sped by the two-edged blade,
On servile couch now ignominious laid.

CLYTEMNESTRA. STROPHE VIII.

Dost boast as mine this deed?
Then wrongly thou dost read,
†To count me Agamemnon's wife;—for know,
Appearing in the mien
Of this dead monarch's queen,
The old Atridan Fury dealt the blow;—
Venging the horrid feast,
For the slain babes, as priest,
The full-grown victim now he layeth low.

1480

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE V

That thou art guiltless of this blood
 Who will attest? Yet by thy side,
 Haply, as thy accomplice, stood
 The Fury who doth here preside.
 Through streams of kindred gore
 Presseth grim Arcs on to claim
 Requit for the deed of shame;—
 The clotted blood of babes devoured of yore. 1490

ANTISTROPHE VI.

Woe! Woe!

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 How voice my heartfelt grief? Thou liest there
 Entangled in the spider's guileful snare,
 In impious toils thou gaspest forth thy breath.

ANTISTROPHE VII.

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 Sped by the two-edged blade,
 On servile couch now ignominious laid.

CLYTEMNESTRA. ANTISTROPHE VIII.

By no unjust decree
 Perished this man, for he 1500
 Through guile hath household death enacted here:—
 His proper child he slew,
 Sweet bud from me that grew,
 Iphigenia, wept with many a tear.
 Foul quittance for foul deed;—

He reaped the sword's due meed,
 Hence no proud boast from him let Hades hear!

Chorus. STROPHE IX.

Perplexed I am, bewildered sore
 Which way to turn; escape is vain; 151
 Totters the house; I dread the crimson rain
 That with loud plashing shakes these walls; no more
 Falloth in niggard droppings now the gore.
 And bent on deed of mischief, Fate anew
 On other whetstones, whetteth vengeance due.

ANTISTROPHE II.

Earth! Earth! oh hadst thou been
 My shroud ere I my king
 Prone in the silver-sided bath had seen!
 Who will inter him? Who his dirge shall sing?
 So hardy thou? Wilt thou who didst assail 152
 Thy husband's life, thyself uplift the wail,
 With graceless grace thy outrage to atone?

ANTISTROPHE III.

Weeping with honest grief
 Over the god-like chief,
 His funeral praises who shall now intone?

CLYTEMNESTRA. STROPHE X.

Not thine the task to counsel here.
 By us he fell: this man we slew;
 Ours be it to inurn him too 153
 Borne from the palace, o'er the bier

Shall sound no notes of wailing ;—no,
 But by Cocytos' rapid flow
 Iphigenia him shall meet ;
 His daughter, as besecmeth, arms shall throw
 Around her father, and with kisses greet.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE IX.

That taunt still answers taunt we soo.
 Here to adjudge is hard indeed.
 Spoiled be the spoiler ; who sheds blood must blood.
 While Zeus surviveth shall this law survive. 1540
 Deceit must suffer ; 'tis the Fates' decree ;
 Who from the house the fated curse may drive ?
 The race is welded to calamity.

CLYTEMNESTRA. ANTISTROPHE X.

Ay ! now on Truth thou dost alight !
 I with the demon of this race—
 The Pleiethonid—an oath will plight.
 My doom, though grievous, I embrace.
 But for the rest, hence let him haste !
 Another mansion let him waste 1550
 By kindred murder. For myself,
 When from these halls blood-frenzy I have chased,
 Small pittance shall I crave of worldly pelf.

[Enter Ægisthus, arrayed in royal robes, and with armed attendants.]

ÆGISTHOS.

Hail, joyous light of justice-bearing day !
 That the Olympian gods, judges of men,

Mark earthly guilt now well may I aver,
 Seeing this man (to me a welcome sight)
 Prono in the Furies' death-robe ;—paid the debt
 Of deeds, devised, and compassed by his sire. 1560
 For Atreus, Argos' ruler, this man's father,
 Did from the city and his home expel
 Thyestes, rival in the sovereignty,—
 My father, to be plain, and his own brother.
 Returning to his home, as suppliant,
 Wretched Thyestes found a lot secure,
 Not doomed his natal soil with blood to stain,
 Himself : but Atreus, this man's godless sire,
 Feigning, with zeal officious more than kind,
 With festive rites to welcome back my sire, 1570
 A banquet of his children's flesh prepared ;
 Their feet he serves,—the members of their hands,—
 Disguised indeed,—sitting himself aloof.
 Thyestes, all unconscious, eats the food
 Curse-laden, as thou seest, to the race.
 Discerning then the impious deed, he shrieked,
 And back recoiling the foul slaughter spewed.
 Spurning, with righteous curse, th' insulted board
 Dread doom he vows to the Pelopidae ;—
 "So perish the whole race of Pleisthenes." 1580
 Hence is it that ye see this man laid low,
 And me, the righteous planner of his death.
 For me, the thirteenth child, in swathing clothes,
 He with my wretched sire, to exile drove.
 But, grown to manhood, Justice led me back,
 And I, although aloof, have reached this man,

The threads combining of the fatal plot.
Now for myself 'twere glorious to die,
Him having seen entrapped in Justice' toils.

Chorus.

To honour insolence in guilt, Ægisthos, 1590
I know not;—that with purpose thou didst kill
This man, thou boastest; of his piteous doom
Sole author thou:—I tell thee thine own head
To Justice brought, be sure shall not escape
The curse of stoning by the people's hand.

ÆGISTHOS.

Plying the lowest oar, dost menace us
Who from the upper benches sway the helm?
Soon shalt thou know how bitter at thy years
Wisdom by stern necessity to learn.
But bonds and hunger-pangs, to cure the mind
Of stubborn old, are skilful leeches found. 1600
Dost see these things, yet canst thou not perceive?
Against the pricks kick not;—'tis dangerous!

Chorus.

Woman, house-mate to him from recent war
Return'd,—defiler of thy husband's bed,
Death thou didst plot against this warrior chief.

ÆGISTHOS.

These words will fountains be of bitter tears.
Thy tongue the opposite to Orpheus is;
For he drew all by rapture of his voice,

While thou, by idle bark, dost all things stir
†To hate;—when conquered, thou wilt tamer
show. 1610

Chorus.

Shalt thou be ruler of the Argives, thou,
Who, when that thou hadst plotted this man's death,
Didst courage lack to strike the blow thyself?

ÆGISTHOS.

To spread the snare was plainly woman's part,
For I, his ancient foe-man, was suspect;
But armed with this man's treasure, be it mine
To rule his citizens. Th' unruly colt
That, barley-fed, turns restive, I will bind
†With heavier thong than yokes the trace-horse;
—him,
Darkness' grim comrade, Famine, soon shall tame. 1620

Chorus.

Why didst thou not, base-hearted, slay this man
Thyself? But now his wife has slaughtered him,
The land polluting and her country's gods.
Orestes, haply sees he still the light,
That, home-returning through auspicious Fate,
He may, with mighty stroke, deal death to both?

ÆGISTHOS.

Since thou art minded thus to act, not talk alone,
know quickly.

* * * *

[To his attendants.

Come on, my faithful body-guard, the fray is not far distant.

Chorus.

Come on then, and with hand on hilt, let every one make ready.

ÆGISTHOS.

Be well assured, with hand on hilt, to die I too refuse not.

Chorus.

To die,—thine utterance we accept, and take as thy death-omen.

CLITEMNESTRA.

Dearest of husbands let us not, I pray, work further mischief.

Already in our many woes reaped have we wretched harvests.

Of sorrow there hath been enough; let us forbear more bloodshed.

Go thou, and ye too aged men, seek your appointed mansions,

Ere aught ye do to work mischance. As fate enjoined we've acted.

If trouble is the lot of man, enough have we encountered;

Down smitten by the heavy stroke of fell Atridan demon.

Thus ye a woman's counsel have, if any deign to hearken.

ÆGISTHOS.

To think that their vain tongue 'gainst me into such speech should blossom;—

That they should hurl forth words like these, their proper doom thus tempting:

They against sober reason err, thus to insult their ruler.

Chorus.

Upon the evil man to fawn is not the wont of Argives.

ÆGISTHOS.

But, be assured, some future day, I yet shall overtake you.

Chorus.

Not so if hither to return some god should guide Orastes.

ÆGISTHOS.

Full well I know that exiles still on hopes are wont to batten.

Chorus.

Work as thou listest. Gorge thy fill. Stain justice Thou canst do it.

ÆGISTHOS.

Be sure that thou to me shalt pay the forfeit of thy folly.

Chorus.

Be boastful and be bold, like cock beside his partner strutting.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

These senseless barkings hood not thou; thyself and
I together,
Ruling within these royal halls, will all things wisely
order.

[Exeunt.]

NOTES TO THE AGAMEMNON.

—o—o—o—|

[My friend the translator wishing to obviate the charge of arbitrarily departing from Æschylus, requests me to draw up a list of the conjectural emendations of the text which I have suggested. Space forbids my here justifying them. I will state them as briefly as I can. F. W. N.]

AGAMEMNON.

VERSE 7. Omit ἀστέρας as an interpretation of δυνίστας, and read *ὅταν φθίνωσιν, ἀντολῆς τε τῶνδ', ὄρω.*

10, 11. Read *ἐπιζει* for *ἐπιζω*, and retain the infinitive *κρατεῖν*. Then *κίαρ* is nominative, and *ὧδε κρατεῖν* refers to the capture of Troy, "get such mastery."

138. For *τόσσον περ εὐφρων καλὰ* . . . read—

‡ *πᾶσιν* ‡ γὰρ *εὐφρων* [*Ἄρτεμις ἐστὶ*] *καλὰ*
ἐρύσσει λεπτοῖσιν ‡ *μαλακῶν τε* ‡ *λαγῶν* . . .

142. *τερπνὰ* [δὲ δαίμονι θέσπιν ὁ μάντις]

τούτων αἰτεῖ σὺμβολα κρῖναι,
δεξιὰ μὲν κατάμομφα δὲ φάσματα ‡ *κρίνων.*
" *Ἰήϊον* ‡ *αὐ καλέω*

146. *Παῦνα* [θεῖον], *μήτινας ἀντιπνύους*
Δαναοῖς χρονίᾳς ἐχειρήδας
‡ *Ἄγρεια τεύξη, σπευδομένα θυσίαν*
έτέραν . . .

In 142, 146, such words as I insert seem to be deficient.

In 144 I have written *κρίνων* for the absurd *στρούθων*.

In 148 a nominative, expressive of Artemis, is deficient. I have changed *ἀπλοίας*, which can hardly bear the epithet *ἀντιπνύους*, into *Ἄγρεια* (huntress).

164. Read *εὔξεται* for the old *λέξει*. *Οὐδὲν εὔξεται πρὶν ὧν* "will not vaunt that he was aught of yore."

175. For *δέ που* read *γέ που*, and remove the stop after *σωφρονεῖν*. Join *ἄκοντας* with *σωφρονεῖν*, *ἦλθε* with *βιαιῶς*. "And to men, loath to learn sobriety, there cometh forcibly a grace (I trow) of deities, who sit on holy bench." The "grace" is the painful wisdom learned by suffering.

226. For *προνωπῇ* read *προνωπίης*.

233. After *γραφῆς* insert [*ποικιλῆς*]. In the antistrophe do not omit *προκλύειν*, but for *ἐπεὶ* read *πῇ*, and omit *ἢ* before *λύσις*. *Τὸ μέλλον δὲ προκλύειν, πῇ γένοιτ' ἂν λύσις, προχαίρειω*.

278. For *ἰσχὺς* read *ὄσχος* or *ὄσχους*, "*twigs*" of flame; suggested by *πύκη*, the pine. In the corrupt *πρὸς ἡδονὴν* a verb is concealed, such as *προήχμασεν*, *προήκρισεν*, vibrated, jerked forward. *Προσήλασεν* is possible, but was less likely to be corrupted than some rarer verb.

290. Before *φλέγουσαν* a whole line seems to be lost, such as [*αἰγὴν κελύουσ', ἀστραπαῖς εὐαγγέλοις*] *φλέγουσαν*.

327. For *ὥς δυσδαίμονες* Blomfield well gave *ὥς δ' εὐδαίμονες*.

365. Treading in Blomfield's steps, I attempt the corrupt passage thus—

*πέφονται δ' † ἐγγενῆς
ἀτολήμῳ "Ἄρη
πνιόντων, μείζον ἢ δικαίως.
φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπερφρεῦ,
† τὸδ' οὔτε βέλτιστόν † ἐστ'
οὐτ' ἀπήμαντον . . .*

(Tōde, the fact of excessive abundance.)

412. For *πάρεστι σιγὰς ἄνιμος ἀλοῖδορος*

ἄδιστος ἀφεμένων ἰδεῖν;

read (until we get something better)—

*πάρεστι σιγὰ κατ' οἶμους, ἀλοῖδορος,
τῷιστ' ἀφωμένων ἰδεῖν.*

Join *σιγὰ ἀφωμένων*. "There is silence along (her) paths,

while they grope to see things that cannot be seen." I understand *ἀφωμένων* of Helen's *ὑμηλική*, her maids of honour. In antistrophe for *Ἑλλάδος* read *Ἑλλάνος*.

541. For *οὐ λαχόντες*, which is nonsense, read *ὀλολύζοντες*, or *οἰμώζοντες*.

741. This very corrupt passage admits of an approximate solution, thus—

*ὑβριν, τότ' ἢ τὸδ', ὅτε τὸ κύριον μολῇ,
† νεαρῶς † φανοῦσαν † τόκοισι
δαίμονα † παντομίχαν
ἀνίερν θράσος μελαι-
νις μελίθροισιν "Ἄτας,
εἰδομέναν τοκεῦσιν.*

Vulgo, † νεὰ † φαύς κύτον | δαίμονα † τε † τὸν ἄμαχον ἀπὶ-
λεμον | ἀνίερν . . . Θράσος "Ἄτης is put for θράσεια "Ἄτη,
and εἰδομένη, *scm.*, agrees with it. If *μελαινίας* is correct, it
seems to mean "gloomy (funereal)," and is joined with the
dative *μελίθροισι*. Then the antistrophe is (omitting *θίον* in
740, and reading *ἔδεθλα* with Dindorf, &c.)—

*τὰ χρυσόπαστα δ' ἔδεθλα σὺν πίνῳ χερῶν
παλιντρόποις ὕμμασιν λιποῦσ', Ὀσίαν προσίβα, . . .*

(for *vulg.*, *ῥσια*).

776. Adopting from Franke *ἐκ θυσιῶν* for *ἐκούσιον*, read also *θρήσκοισι* for *θνήσκουσι*, which cannot be right. Then, we get

*θράσος ἐκ θυσιῶν
ἄνδρασι θρήσκοισι κομίζων.*

"infusing into religious men confidence from the sacrifices."

814. *Πολλὴν . . . λέγω*. Schutz, if I remember, regards the line as spurious, and with good reason. *Πολλὴν ἄνωθεν* has come from *πολλὰς ἄνωθεν* just above; and he imagines a commentator to have expounded the second Geryon to be Agamemnon: *τὸν κάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγει*; "for he does not mean the Geryon below."

994. For *μοῖρα μοῖραν*, which is nonsense, read *μοῖρ' ἄμοιρά μ'*; and compare *νῆες ἄναε, γάμος ἄγαμος*.

1095. For *μελαγκέρων*, by all means read *μελαγκρόκη*, and for *ἐν πέπλοις* perhaps *ἐμπλακέντα*.

1443. For πολύμναστον read (*metri causa*) πολυμναστον, and after the word mark a hiatus of five lines. The antistrophic to πολυμναστον is τίς ὁ θρηνησών.

1446. For κράτος ἰσόψυχον (which is defective in metre as well as sense) read κράτος σωσέψυχον, "thou establishest a soul-blighting sway by means of women." Hermann by inserting τ' after κράτος did not improve the sense.

1476. Read, for the sense, εἶναι μ' ἄλοχον [τοῦδ' ὀλέτειμων], also 1480, . . . τότδ' ἀπέτισεν [φονίασι δίκαις]. In antistrophe omit Ἰφιγένειαν as a gloss, and read

τὴν πολυκλαυτον ἀνάξια δράσας,
then strophe and antistrophe become commensurate

Perhaps in 1497 δολίφ should be δουλίφ, and in 1501 δολίαν should be δουλίον, which the argument from ἀνελεύθερον seems to demand. (Indeed the metre of δολίφ in 1497 is not satisfactory.) Yet the argument of οὐδέ γὰρ in 1501 remains obscure or strained.

1610. For ἄξει read ἔχθει, in contrast to χαρᾷ.

1618. For σειραφόρον read σειραφόρων: "bands heavier than common harness."

CHOEPHORI.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ORESTES.
CHORUS OF CAPTIVE WOMEN.
ELECTRA.
CLYTEMNESTRA.
ÆGISTHOS.
PYLADES.
NURSE.
ATTENDANT.

[SCENE.—The royal palace in ARGOS, as in the previous tragedy. The tomb of AGAMEMNON is seen in the orchestra. ORESTES and PYLADES enter in the garb of travellers. They approach the tomb. ORESTES ascends the steps.]

CHOEPHORI.*

ORESTES.

THEE, shade-escorting Hermes, I invoke,
In Hades guardian of my royal sire,—
To me, thy suppliant, be saviour thou,
My firm ally,—for to this land I come
Exile no more;—on this sepulchral mound
Father I call thee,—hearken to my cry!—

* * * * *

A primal lock, as nurture-gift, I vowed
To Inachos, and now this second lock,
Grief's token, Father, I devote to thee,—
For, absent from thy funeral obsequies,
I could not then as mourner weep thy death,
Nor speed with outstretched hand thy royal bier.

[The Chorus, arrayed in mourning costume, come forth from the palace. ELECTRA closes the procession.]

But who are these? What means this female train 10
Conspicuous, in the sable garb of woo?

* The libation-pourers.

In light who dwell elate ;—
 While woes from Darkness' glimmering realm
 †Lingering on others wait ;—
 Others sheer Night enshrouds in blackest fate.

STROPHÉ III.

When nurturing earth is blood-drenched, lo
 Fixed is for aye the vengeance-crying gore ;—
 And he who shed it, paying Atë's score,
 †Doth burgeon out in all-entangling woo.

ANTISTROPHÉ III.

The bridal couch if man profane,
 †Hopeless is cure ; though in one common flood,
 To purify the hand defiled by blood,
 All streams commingling flow, they flow in vain.

EPODE.

But for myself, through Heaven's command,
 The captured city's doom I share ;—
 Led hither from my native land,
 'Tis mine the menial's lot to bear.
 Their acts, whose will my fortune sways,
 Just or unjust, I needs must praise :
 †Beneath my vest grief's anguished throes
 Shrouding, I quell my bitter hate ;—
 While numbed in heart by secret woes,
 Of my true lords I weep the hapless fate.

ELECTRA.

Ye captive women, ye who tend this home,

Since ye are present to escort with me
 These lustral rites, your counsel now I crave.
 How, while I pour these offerings on the tomb,
 Speak friendly words ? and how invoke my Siro ? 80
 Shall I declare that from a loving wife
 To her dear lord I bear them ? from my mother ?
 My courage fails, nor know I what to speak,
 Pouring libations on my father's tomb.
 Or shall I pray, as holy wont enjoins,
 That to the senders of these chaplets, he
 Requital may accord, ay ! meed of ill.
 Or, with no mark of honour, silently,
 For so my father perished, shall I pour
 These offerings, potion to be drunk by earth,
 Then, tossing o'er my head the lustral urn,
 (As one who loathed refuse forth has cast,) 90
 With eyes averted, back retrace my steps ?
 Be ye partakers in my counsel, friends,
 For in this house one common hate we share.
 Through fear hide not the feelings of your heart ;
 For what is destined waits alike the free
 And him o'ermastered by another's hand ;—
 If ye have aught more wise to urge, say on.

Chorus.

Thy father's tomb revering as an altar,
 Since thou commandest, I will speak my thoughts.

ELECTRA.

As thou my father's tomb revere'st, speak.

But for thy focs, may thine avenger come,
 And those be justly slain who slaughtered thee.
 Thus intermingled with my pious prayer,
 For them an evil utterance I pour.
 To us upsend these blessings from below, 140
 With gods, and Earth, and Justice conquest-crowned."
 Over such prayers, libations, lo! I pour.
 Yours be it now, lifting the solemn wail,
 To crown with dole the pæan of the dead.

[While the Chorus sings the following Ode, ELECTRA ascends
 the steps of the tomb, and pours the libation.]

Chorus. STROPHE.

†Drop ye for the dead
 Tears with pattering sound;
 Lustral rain is shed
 O'er the hallowed mound,
 From the pure which screeneth bale,
 While the powers of Evil quail.
 Hear, O master, at thy tomb, 150
 Whispered sounds from sorrow's murky gloom.

ANTISTROPHE.

Now in measured flow
 Tune the notes of woe!
 When will warrior brave,
 †(War-gal strong to save
 Houses in the dust laid low,
 Hurl the spear, from horned bow
 Wing the arrow's deadly flight,
 Or wield the hilted brand in closing fight?

ELECTRA.

These earth-drained offerings hath my sire received.

[She perceives the lock of hair laid by ORESTES.]

Hail! this new argument now ponder ye.

Chorus.

What meanest thou? Boundloath my heart with fear?

ELECTRA.

Laid on the tomb this lock of hair I see. 160

Chorus.

Shorn from what man, or what deep-girdled maid?

ELECTRA.

Who here will guess may easily divine.

Chorus.

Although the older, I from thee would learn.

ELECTRA.

There is but one who could have shorn this hair.

Chorus.

True, focs are they who with the lock should mourn.

ELECTRA.

And certes, it is very like in hue.

Chorus.

Like to what tresses? That I fain would learn.

But for thy foes, may thine avenger come,
 And those be justly slain who slaughtered thee.
 Thus intermingled with my pious prayer,
 For them an evil utterance I pour.
 To us upsend these blessings from below, 140
 With gods, and Earth, and Justice conquest-crowned."
 Over such prayers, libations, lo! I pour.
 Yours be it now, lifting the solemn wail,
 To crown with dole the pean of the dead.

[While the Chorus sings the following Ode, ELECTRA ascends
 the steps of the tomb, and pours the libation.]

Chorus. STROPHÉ.

†Drop ye for the dead
 Tears with pattering sound;
 Lustral rain is shed
 O'er the hallowed mound,
 From the pure which screeneth bale,
 While the powers of Evil quail.
 Hear, O master, at thy tomb, 15
 Whispered sounds from sorrow's murky gloom.

ANTISTROPHÉ.

Now in measured flow
 Tune the notes of woe!
 When will warrior brave,
 †(War-god strong to save
 Houses in the dust laid low,
 Hurl the spear, from hornèd bow
 Wing the arrow's deadly flight,
 Or wield the hilted brand in closing fight?

ELECTRA.

These earth-drained offerings hath my sire received.

[She perceives the lock of hair laid by ORESTES.]

Ha! this now argument now ponder ye.

Chorus.

What meanest thou? Boundesth my heart with fear?

ELECTRA.

Laid on the tomb this lock of hair I see. 160

Chorus.

Shorn from what man, or what deep-girdled maid?

ELECTRA.

Who hero will guess may easily divine.

Chorus.

Although the elder, I from thee would learn.

ELECTRA.

There is but one who could have shorn this hair.

Chorus.

True, foes are they who with the lock should mourn.

ELECTRA.

And certes, it is very like in hue.

Chorus.

Like to what tresses? That I fain would learn.

ELECTRA.

In sooth it hath the colour of mine own.

Chorus.

Then should it be Orestes' stealthy gift?

ELECTRA.

The semblance of his clust'ring locks it bears. 170

Chorus.

But hither how could he have dared to come?

ELECTRA.

He this shorn lock hath sent to grace his sire.

Chorus.

Not less bewept by me what now thou sayest,
If, living, he may never tread this land.

ELECTRA.

Rolls o'er my heart a surge of bitterness,
Smitten am I as with a piercing shaft;
And from these eyes, while gazing on this lock,
The thirsty drops of sorrow's wintry flood
Flow unrestrained. For how may I conceive
That other of the townsmen owns this hair? 1
And certes, she who slew him sheared it not,
My mother,—all unworthy of the name,
Who towards her children bears a godless mind.
Though not with full assurance may I call
This offering his, dearest of mortal men,

Orestes,—still, hope fawns upon my heart.
Alas!—

Oh had it, herald-like, a friendly voice,
So I by doubt no more should be distraught.
Then had it clearly counselled me this lock
To loathe, if severed from a foeman's head, 190
Or else, akin to me, had shared my grief,
Gracing this tomb, an honour to my sire.

Chorus.

But let us call upon the gods, who know
In what dire storms, like sailors, we are whirled;
Since if by them our safety is ordained,
From tiny seed may spring a mighty stock.

[ELECTRA, descending the steps of the tomb.]

ELECTRA.

And lo, these traces—yet another sign;
Footprints that tally with my own;—and see,
Two diverse outlines are impressed, his own,
And also of some fellow-wayfarer. 200
The impress of this foot, from heel to toe,
Thus measured, hath the symmetry of mine.
Travails my heart—disordered is my wit.

[ORESTES approaching her.]

ORESTES.

Acknowledging to Heaven thy prayers fulfilled,
Pray that the further issue may be blest.

ELECTRA.

What have I won by favour of the gods?

ORESTES.

Him to behold for whom thou long hast prayed.

ELECTRA.

How knowest thou for whom I raised the prayer?

ORESTES.

I know Orestes in thy heart enshrined.

ELECTRA.

And say wherein are now my prayers fulfilled? 210

ORESTES.

Myself am he;—seek none than me more dear.

ELECTRA.

Stranger, around me wouldst thou weave some snare?

ORESTES.

Myself against myself would then contrive.

ELECTRA.

Wouldst thou mock at my calamity?

ORESTES.

At mine own grief I mocked, mocked I at thine.

ELECTRA.

Art thou Orestes? Thou to whom I speak?

ORESTES.

Myself thou seest, and discernest not;
Yet gazing on this lock of mourning hair,

And in my footprints marking well my track,
Thy fluttered thoughts did paint me to thine eye. 220
This lock, thy brother's, like in hue to thine,
Mark well, applying it whence it was shorn;
Mark too this garment, by thy shuttle wrought,
Scenes of the chase, embroidered by thy hand.
Be calm,—through joy lose not thy self-control;
For deadly are, I know, those near in blood.

ELECTRA.

Oh! cherished darling of thy father's house,
Hope of our race, thou precious seed, long wept,
Trusting in thy strong arm thou shalt regain
Thy natal home. O fondly loved, in whom 230
Centre four dear affections; for perforce,
Thee I must hail as father, and on thee
Love for my mother, justly hated, falls;
And for my sister, pitilessly slain.
My faithful brother hast thou ever been,
My pride, my awe;—only may Justice, Strength,
With Zeus supreme, third Saviour, aid thy cause.

ORESTES.

Zeus, Zeus, beholder be thou of these woes;—
Mark the young brood, left of their eagle-sire,
Who perished in the folds, the snaky coils 240
Of direful serpent;—orphaned they endure
The pangs of hunger; not yet strong of wing
To carry to the nest the eagle's prey.
So mayest thou behold us twain, myself,

And her, Electra, offspring sire-beroft,
Thus doomed to common exile from our home.

ELECTRA.

And if of sire, who greatly honoured thee
With many a sacrifice, thou slay the brood,
Whence, from like hand, wilt festive gifts obtain?
As none, if thou the eaglets slay, henceforth 250
To mortals will thy trusty omens bear;
So, if all withered, ne'er this royal stock
On sacrificial days shall aid thy shrine.
Provide; from low estate to greatness lift
A house which verily now prostrate seems.

Chorus.

Oh children, Saviours of your father's hearth,
Forbear, lest some one should o'erhear your words
And all, with gossip-loving tongue, rehearse
To those in power; whom dead I fain would see
Blazing 'mid spurning pine-wood's pitchy brands. 260

ORESTES.

Of Loxias the mighty oracle
Will not betray me; He to this emprizo
Hounded me on,—against my inmost reins
Denouncing freezing curses, should I not
Requite the authors of my father's death.
Stript bare and goaded on by forfeiture,
He bade me slay them as my sire they slow,
Declaring I should else atonement make
With my own life and many grievous woe.

First evils dire, from earth that spring, he showed, 270
Soothing to hostile powers; naming those plagues,—
A leprous canker, cleaving to the flesh,
That eats with rancorous tooth the vital strength,
And through disease blanches the youthful locks;
Next of the Furies other dread assaults
He pictured, springing from my father's blood.
For the dark shafts of those beneath the earth,
(The slain who cry for vengeance to their kin,)
With frenzy wild, and groundless fear at night,
Disturb and harass his distracted soul, 280
Who clearly in the darkness Phœbos sees
To knit his brow.—Thus from the town they chase
The wretch all mangled with the brazen scourge.
Moreover to such caitiff is denied
Or festal cup to share, or solemn pledge,
While from the altars, him, a father's wrath
Unseen excludes;—him may no host receive
To cleanse, with purifying rite, from guilt;—
Till, friendless and dishonoured, dies the wretch,
The shrivelled prey of all-destructive doom;
Such oracles I needs must trust; and e'en 290
Mistrustful were I, vengeance must be wrought;
For many divers promptings mingle here;—
The god's command, heart-sorrow for my sire,
And indigence hard-pressing: never then
Should citizens, of mortals most renowned,
Who, with heroic spirit, wasted Troy,
Be slaves of women twain. For, sooth, his soul
Is womanish, as trial quick may tell.



Upon man's daring, crafty deed,
†To parents thou dost deal their righteous meed.

Chorus. STROPHE V.

Mine be it, in exultant strain,
To celebrate the howl of pain
From caitiff smitten to the death,
From woman yielding up her breath! 380
†For why conceal the frenzied throes
That shake my troubled soul? There blows
At my heart's prow a tempest dire;—
'Tis rancour's breath, 'tis vengeful ire.

ORESTES. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Oh that, with arm of might
Great Zeus, who guards the right,
†Wee, wee,—would strike the guilty pair!
Come peace to this domain!
Just meed may the unjust obtain! 390
Earth, and ye powers of Hades, hear my prayer.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE .

For law it is, when on the plain
Blood hath been shed, new blood must fall.
Carnage doth to the Fury call;
Avenger of the earlier slain,
She comes, new Ruin leading in her train.

ELECTRA. STROPHE VI.

Earth, and ye powers who rule below,

†Behold, and ye dread curses of the slain,
 Behold us, outcast, miserable twain,
 Poor remnant of the Atridae;—whither go? 400
 Oh! sov'reign Zeus, what refuge from our woo?

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE V.

Throbbeth my woman's heart with fear,
 Tho while thy dirge assails mine ear;
 At one time hopeful courage wanes,
 And darkness o'er my inmost reins
 Broods, as I list the doleful sound;
 †Then once again my changeful heart,
 With hope elate, bids grief depart,
 And fair the prospect smileth round.

ORESTES. ANTISTROPHE VI.

Can grief by flattery be subdued, 410
 Or soothed by fawning? No, to quell the pain
 By parent's hate engendered, charms are vain;
 Like savage wolf that ravens for its food,
 Tameless from birth is sorrow's torturing brood.

Chorus. STROPHE VII.

With Arian beat I strike my breast;
 My outstretched hands in wild unrest,
 With Kissian mourner's rhythmic woe,
 In quick succession,—to and fro,
 Shower from all quarters blow on blow;
 While with the hurly rings amain
 My battered head and my distracted brain. 420



ORESTES.

O Earth, my sire upsend to watch the fray. 480

ELECTRA.

O Proserpine, grant beautiful success!

ORESTES.

Think, Father, of the bath that reaved thy life.

ELECTRA.

Think of the net in which they tangled thee.

ORESTES.

In shackles, not of brass, wast thou ensnared.

ELECTRA.

Basely enveloped in the treacherous folds.

ORESTES.

Art thou not roused by these reproaches, Sire?

ELECTRA.

Dost thou not lift erect thine honoured head?

ORESTES.

Either send Justice, ally to thy friends,
Or give them in like grasp thy foes to hold,
If thou, o'erthrown, wouldst victor be in turn. 490

ELECTRA.

And hearken, Father, this my last appeal;
Behold thy fledglings nestled on thy tomb;

"If that Ægisthos knoweth, being at home,
Why 'gainst the suppliant doth he shut the door?"
If, passing then the threshold of the gates,
Him I discover on my father's seat,—
Or should he meet me face to face, and set
His eyes on me, ere he can speak the word,
"Whence is this stranger?"—I will lay him dead,
Spitting his body round my nimble steel.
The Fury thus, of gore insatiate,
Shall blood untempered quaff, third, crowning draught

[To ELECTRA.]

Go thou,—keep watchful guard within the house, 5
That all, well ordered, fitly may combine.

[To the Chorus.]

To you a tongue of wisdom I commend,
To speak in season, or from speech refrain.—

[To PYLADES.]

And for the rest let this man look to it,
When in the strife of swords this arm hath won.

[Exit ORESTES and PYLADES. ELECTRA enters the palace.]

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Full many a horror drear
And ghastly, Earth doth rear;—
With direful monsters teems encircling Ocean;
Meteors, with threatening sheen,
Hang heaven and earth between;—
The tempest's wrath still raves with wild commotion
These, and dire winged things, and things that crawl
Thou mayst describe them all.

ANTISTROPHE I.

But man's audacious might
What words can paint aright,
Or woman's daring spirit who may tell?
Her passion's frenzied throes,
Co-mates of mortal woes?
For love unlovely, when its evil spell 5
'Mong brutes or men the feebler sex befools,
Conjugal bands o'errules.

STROPHE II.

Let him confirm the truth I sing,
Whose thoughts soar not on Pelly's wing,
Knowing full well what Thestios' daughter planned*;

* The story of Meleager, as related by Phoenix to Achilles (Il. ix. 529), is fundamentally opposed to that of the later poets. In Homer nothing is heard of the fatal brand Meleager had, in some unfortunate fray, killed his mother brother; upon which his mother solemnly cursed him, and prayed to Pluto and Persephone for his death. At this I was so indignant (or so paralysed for battle by believing in the curse), that he refused to defend his native city, Calydon at a critical moment, and was only at last prevailed on by his wife to take arms and save it. Here the story ends in Homer; though he says that the Fury who stalks in darkness heard the mother's curse.

According to the later poets, Meleager had slain seven brothers of his mother. At his birth she had been informed by the Fates that he would live until a certain log of wood then burning on the hearth was consumed. On this she snatched it off, extinguished it, and kept it carefully in a chest. But now, in rage for the loss of so many brothers she threw it into the fire, and forthwith her son perished.

Her fiery plot, child-murdering;
 Wretched, who burnt her son's coeval brand.
 Born with him when he cried
 First from the mother's womb;—
 Like-aged with him it died,
 When dawned his day of doom.

600

ANTISTROPHE II.

Needs must we loathe another dame,
 The bloody Scylla, known to fame,*
 Lured by Minos' gifts of fine-wrought gold,
 Neck-gear from Crete,—devoid of shame,
 Was her sire, a friend to foemen, sold.
 Deep-breathing, free from care,
 In slumber while he lay,
 Ruthless she cut th' immortal hair:
 And Hermes seized his prey.

610

STROPHE III.

But since these direful woes have burst,
 †Untimely, into song:—
 Be the foul wedlock too accursed,
 That doth this palace wrong.—
 And cursèd be the plot that snared

* Nisos, king of Megara, is said to have had on his head a certain purple lock, upon which, according to the words of an oracle, his life depended. Scylla, his daughter, knew it, and bribed by a golden necklace, the gift of Minos, king of Crete, she cut the fatal lock, and thus caused her father's death.

(By woman's brain devised,)
 The armed chief who foemen scared,
 Whom faithful lioges prized.
 Dear is to me the unstained hearth, and dear
 In woman's hand the unadacious spear.

ANTISTROPHE III.

But first of woes in every clime,
 The Lemnian is deplored;—*
 And still the most detested crime
 As Lemnian is abhorred.
 Branded with infamy by men,
 The impious disappear;
 For whom the righteous gods condemn,
 No mortal dares revere.—
 The lore which thus we chant in choral strain,
 Say ye, doth Reason at her bar arraign?

620

STROPHE IV.

Right through the lungs doth Justice' hand
 Drive home the bitter steel;
 †For all must perish who withstand
 Her mandates, and with reckless heed,
 Trample high Jove's command.

630

* Herodotus, after relating how the Lemnian women had been put to death by their husbands, adds, "From this crime, and that which the women perpetrated before this, who, with the assistance of Thoas, killed their own husbands, all cruel actions are wont to be called Lemnian throughout Greece."—(vi. 138.)

Choephor.

119

Hear, ye consentient Gods! Through bloody deed
Retributive, wash out the gore, 790
Dread heirloom from those slain of yore.
Let murder in this palace cease to brood,
When paid the bloody score!

MESODE.

Thou tenant of the cave,—great Spirit,
Give to the hero to inherit
His halls ancestral;—may his eyes,
Fearless and bright,
Peer freely forth from sorrow's veiled night.

ANTISTROPHE III.

†May Maia's son, well-versed in guile,
Upon the righteous cause propitious smile! 800
Dark words and subtle speaking, he by night
Men's eyes o'ercloudeth, nor by day
More manifest his secret way.
Yet many a deed, in darkness veiled awhile,
By him is brought to light.

STROPHE IV.

The work achieved, we'll chant the glorious ode;
Our woman's strain,
Propitious, with the mourners' stringed refrain,
Shall ransom this abode.
†Then shall we own the sway of righteous laws,
While Atë from our friends her curse withdraws. 810





CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ah me! this man the snake I bare and reared.

ORESTES.

True prophet was thy dream-engendered fear.
Him thou didst slay whom thou shouldst not have slain.
So doom unseemly suffer in thy turn.

[ORESTES drags his mother into the palace, followed by
PYLADES.]

Chorus.

E'en of this pair I weep the twofold woo.
But since Orestes hath the bloody height
Achieved of dire revenge, one hope remains,
Not quenched the eye of Atreus' royal house. 920

STROPHE I.

As fell at last on Priam's guilty race
The late avenging Fate;—
A twofold lion now, a twofold Mars
Treads Atreus' halls elate.
Sent from the Pythian shrine
By oracle divine,
Conquest doth now the fugitive await.

STROPHE II.

Hail jubilant the house redeemed from bale!
The godless pair no more
Shall waste its gathered store. 930
Hail, joyous riddance, hail!

ANTISTROPHE I.

Requital, guileful power, in stratagem
Dark-veiled who takes delight,
Daughter of Zeus,—Justice yeapt by men,
Pointing their aim aright,—
†Doth, with firm hand, the knife
Unsheath for mortal strife;
While 'gainst her foes she breathes destruction's blight.

STROPHE III.

†For Loxias, the king, 940
Who in Parnassian cavern holds his seat,
Doth vengeance hither bring,
Guilelessly guileful; lame, yet sure her feet.
Weighty the saying; Zeus, although divine,
No consort is of guilt; needs must we pay
Homage to His heaven-ruling sway.
Clearly the light doth shine!

ANTISTROPHE II.

†Reft was I of the sun whose sudden ray
Did with new joy illumo
These halls, long sunk in gloom; 950
It gleamed,—then died away.

ANTISTROPHE III.

†Anon, the cheering light,
Now kindled, in this house shall shine once more,
What time, with lustral rite,
From the polluted hearth is purged the gore,

This robe invoking that achieved his doom.
Our deeds, our woes, our wretched race I mourn,
Reaping from victory pollution dire.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE.

Alas! no son of mortal race,
Unscathed the path of life may trace
Woe! Woe!
Fadeth one grief, another comes apace.

ORESTES.

That ye betimes may learn, (since I myself 1010
Know not the issue,) for as chariot-war
With steeds ungoverned, from the course I swerve;
Thoughts past control are whirling me along,
Their captive slave; while terror in my heart
Her psan and her frenzied dance prepares.
Hear me, my friends, while Reason holds her seat;
With Justice' sanction I my mother smote,
My father's slayer, a god-hated post.
As prime incitement to the daring act
Of Loxias I plead this oracle;
That, if I slow, blameless I should be held; 1020
But if I failed;—my doom I will not speak;
For bowshot cannot reach such mighty woe.
And now behold,—bearing this olive-branch,
Enwreathed with wool, as suppliant I seek
Earth's navel stone, Apollo's seat, where burns
The flame of fire that quenchless hath been called,
Fleeing from kindred blood. For other shrine

Did Loxias forbid me to approach.
In future time for me, let Argive men
Bear faithful witness how these woes were wrought; 1030
Exile and wanderer from this land I roam,
And dead or living leave this fame behind.

Chorus.

Noble thy deed, then vent not from thy mouth
Ill-omened words, nor speak with bodeful tongue.
Since thou, with lucky stroke lopping the head
From serpent twain, all Argos' state hast freed.

[*The Furies are seen rising in the background.*]

ORESTES.

Ah! ah! ye handmaids, Gorgon-like they come,
Vested in sable stoles, their locks entwined
With clustering snakes. No longer may I bide.

Chorus.

Dearest of mortals to thy father, say, 1040
What phantoms scare thee?—be not quelled by fear.

ORESTES.

No airy, woe-engendered phantoms these;
Too well I know my mother's vengeful hounds.

Chorus.

Still rocking is the blood upon thy hand,
Hence is it that distraction smites thy brain.

ORESTES.

Apollo lord! swarming they press around,
And from their eyes there drippeth leathsome gore.

Chorus.

One mode of cleansing hast thou;—Loxias
Touch thou, he from these woes will set thee free.

ORESTES.

Viewless to you these shapes, I see them clear; 1050
They drive me forth,—no longer can I bide.

[He rushes out.

Chorus.

But blessings on thee, and, in direst strait,
May He who views thee graciously protect!

[While singing the following Ode the Chorus enters the palace.]

Thrice the Atridan storm hath burst

O'er Mycenæ's halls.

†Child-devouring horror first

Brooded o'er those walls.

Next a king's disaster came,

When the chief who led

Hellas' warriors, known to fame,

In the bath lay dead.

Now, behold a third is come,—

Saviour, shall I say, or doom?

From what quarter spoil?

Full-accomplished, when shall Fate,

Lulled to rest, her stormy ire abate?

1060

NOTES.

CHOEPHORI.

56. For μένει χρονίζοντ' ἄχην βρύει read μένει χρονίζοντας ἄχην, omitting βρύει.

61. For παρκατέας νόσου βρύειν read παγκατέας νόσου βρύειν.

65. For ἐκ μίας ὁδοῦ I conjecture ἐκ [τρικυ]μίας ὁμοῦ; also omit the prosaic τὸν before χερουμνοῦ.

67. For καθαίροντες ἰούσαν ἄτην, perhaps καθαίροντες [καθαίρ]ουσιν μάτην. These changes, suggested by the sense, complete 60—63 and 64—67 as antistrophic. I believe 68—72 and 73—77 to be also antistrophic; but here dwell only on the changes important to a translator.

In 73, for βίαι φερομένων read βία φερωμένων, and in 71, 72 read—

[δεῖ] δίκαια, μὴ δίκαια,

[μὴ] πρίποντ'

and for ἀρχαῖς βίου, which is unintelligible, the least correction is ἀρχαῖσί μου; yet I suspect that the poet wrote ἀρεταῖσι, "exact in virtue."

145—156. Read ἀπότρεπον for ἀπότροπον, governing accus. ἄχος, and join κενῶν with ἀπότρεπον. Then τ' after κενῶν must be omitted or changed to γ'. In v. 150 σεβασω is clearly corrupt. We need a tribrach, beginning with two consonants, to support the ε of κλύε. I conjecture σκεπαῖα, "things covered." Besides, καναχέες, "tinkling as metal," is an improbable epithet of a tear. The line has no metre. Aldus edited καναχέες, which suggests to me καναχέειν. 'Ολό-

788. By all means retain *νομίζετε*.

791. I think *λύσασθ'* should be *λύσαιθ'*, addressed to the gods.

793. For *τὸ δὲ καλῶς κτάμενον* read *τοῦδε καλῶς κταμένου*, or *τοῦδε καλῶς κταμένου*, and so end the third strophe.

794. *εὖ δὲ δὲ ἴδειν* is certainly corrupt, especially as *ἴδειν* is in the next line. *Σὺ δ' ἀμφιπεῖν . . .* is possible, or *εὖ δ' ἄρ' ἀμφιπεῖν*. After *λαμπρῶς* perhaps *δὲ* is wanting.

799. For *ἐπιφορέτατος* read *ὁ φερίωτατος*.

801. For *κρύπτ' ἀσκοπον δ'* read *κρύφα μὲν, εὐσκοπον δ'*.

802. For *νότα πρό τ'* . . . read *νύκτωρ πρόνυμμάτων*.

803. For *ἐμφανίστερος* read with Schutz *ἐμφανίστερον*. In place of *πολλὰ δ' ἄλλα φανί χρέζων*, which comes out of place after 800, I think we should have, to close antistrophe 3, *πολλὰ τε δὲ ἄλλα φανί*. The superfluous *χρέζων* rises out of the error that Apollo, not Mercury, is intended.

805. For *τοτε δὲ* read *τότ' ὅδ' ἄν*, *κλυτὸν* for *πλούτων*, *λύτρω* for *λυτήριον*, and leave *σχίζων* in 817 unchanged.

811. Read *μεθίστομεν πόλει*. *τὸ δ' εὐνομον ἐμὸ κέρδος αἴζεται*, for *τὸ δ' εὖ ἐμὸν ἐμὸν κέρδος αἴζεται*.

815. *περαίων*. Adopt Blomfield's *πέραιον* οὐκ.

820. For *προπρίσσω χάριτος ὀργὰς λυπρὰς* read *πρόπρατον χάριν σφαγῆς λυτήρας*, as at least something possible.

823. *φονίαν*, read *φόνιον*.

824. *ἐξαπαλλὺς μέρου* cannot be right. Perhaps *ἐξαπαλλὺς ἐν μέρει*, "in turn, in retaliation."

849. After *πολισσομένους* add with Hermann [*πλούτων τε δέμων*].

935. For *ἴθιγε δὲ μάλα*, or *δὲ μάχα*, we need *δὲ ξίφους*. The scholiast has *ἐφῆψατο τοῦ ξίφους*.

940—947. This third strophe is terribly corrupt. For *πάντες* I propose *τάδ' ἄρα*; in *ἐποχθείαζεν* I see *ἀπαξιών*, *τάν*—ξ being written *χσ* in very old style. *τάν* is essential with

δολίαν. For *βλαπτομένην* I propose *βλαψίπου* (*pedo l'ana claudio*); I leave *ἐν χρόνους* as it is, but for *θείσαν ἐποίχεται* I conjecture *οἷσι μετοίχεται*, "fetches in his own times." Then 944, *κρατεῖται πως* should be *κρατεῖ τοι λόγος*, or *φάτις* (see *Pera*, 724; *Suppl.*, 290; *Soph. Aj.*, 978). For *τὸ θεῖον παρὰ τὸ* read *τὸ θεῖον περ ὄντα*, and add [*Δία*] after *ἵπουργεῖν*. Sense and metre are then perfect, except that we may read *μὴ οὐκ* for *μὴ* to remedy hiatus. *Δὲ* after *ἄξιον* must be retained.

948. The second antistrophe begins *μέγαν τ' ἀφρήθην ψάλιον οἶκον ἄναγε μὲν δόμοις*. I propose *μέγαν ἀφρήθην ὤλιον, οἰκίαις | ἀναφανέντ' ἐμοῖς*: the Sun being "prosperity from the prince's face." Next, with Elmsley, *χαμαιπετὴς ἔκειτ'*. But a line is deficient. Perhaps *αἰὲ | [καλυφθεὶς σκότῳ]*, which completes sense and metre.

952. For *χρόνος ἀμείψεται* perhaps *χρόνῳ σκίψεται*, or *χρόνους σκίψεται*. The verb should at least be a Cretic foot.

954. For *μῦσος πᾶν ἐλάσῃ* I would read *μῦσος ἅπαν παραλύσῃ*, for metrical reasons, and because of *ἀτᾶν ἐλατηρίους* following.

958. For *ἰδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι θρεομένοις*, perhaps *ἰδεῖν ἀκοῦσαι τ' ἐραμίνουσιν*.

1058. *μόχθοι τάλανίς τε Θυίστου* is clearly wrong. One cure is to omit *τε Θυίστου*, regarding *Θυίστου* to be an interpolation, and *τε* to have been inserted afterwards for the metre. If *Θυίστου* must be retained, we need something like *πινάκίς* (*the dishes*) for *τάλανίς*; or if *τάλαρος*, like *calathus* may mean a dish, *τάλαροι* will be as plausible.

F. W. N.

EUMENIDES

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PYTHIAN PROPHETESS.
APOLLO.
ORESTES.
GHOST OF CLYTEMNESTRA.
CHORUS OF FURIES.
ATHENA.
ESCORT.

[The Temple of Apollo at Delphi. In the background the summits of Parnassus. The orchestra represents the open court in front of the temple. The PYTHONESS appears praying at an altar adorned with images of the successive divinities of the sanctuary.]

EUMENIDES.

PYTHONESS.

FIRST, with this prayer, I worship of the gods*
Gaia, primeval prophetess;—and next,
Themis, who second, as tradition tells,
Upon her mother's seat was here onthroned;
With her good will, nor in despite of any,
Another child of Earth, Titanian Phœbo,
Third by decree of Fate, assumed this seat;
She as a birth-day gift to Phœbos gave it,
And hence his name to Phœbo is allied.

* In a passage of deep significance Æschylus traces the successive steps in the history of Revelation, as it passed from the Chthonian (earthly) to the Olympian powers. Earth herself was the first prophet. In the simplest phenomena of nature she first spoke to men of the divine character and will. As time went on she gave place to "Right" (Themis), a daughter who was born to her; for the teaching of society and life carries us forward in the knowledge of God. "Right" in turn gave place to a younger sister, Phœbo, the embodiment of light, the symbol of spiritual intelligence. With her ministry the office of the earthly powers was fulfilled, and she transferred her charge, not by claim of succession, but as a voluntary offering, to the bright God of heaven, Phœbus, who himself adopted her name for his own.—*Brooks F. Westcott.*

Leaving the lake and Delos' rocky isle,
 At Pallas' ship-frequented shores he lands, 10
 Then seeks this region, these Parnassian seats;
 Him onward speed, and mightily adore,
 Hephaestus' sons, road-fashioners, who tame
 The savage earth. The god, established here,
 Highly is honoured by the native tribe,
 And by King Delphos, steersman of this land.
 Zeus with prophetic lore his heart inspired,
 And throned him on this sacred seat, fourth soor;
 So Loxias* now is prophet of his sire.
 These gods I worship with preluding prayers. 20
 But be Pronæan † Pallas likewise hailed
 With words of honour! you too I salute,
 Nymphs who frequent Korykia's caverned rock,
 Kindly to birds, and haunt of doities.
 There Dromios, well I wis, the region holds,
 Since with his Thynds thence the god made war,
 And Pentheus coursed, like doubling hare, to death.
 The founts of Pleistos, and Poseidon's might
 Invoking, and high-consummating Zeus,
 As priestess I assume the sacred seat.
 Beyond the past my entrance may they crown 30
 With fair response! If sons of Grocco be here,

* Loxias, an epithet of Apollo, interpreted by most etymologists as alluding to the ambiguities (λογία) of Delphian oracles; some, indeed, think it can be referred to λόγος, speech, as implying that Apollo is the interpreter of Zeus.

† Pronæan, an epithet of Athena at Delphi, as having a chapel or statue there in front of the great temple of Apollo.

Let them, as custom is, approach by lot,
 For as the god doth guide, I prophesy.

[She retires into the temple, and after a brief pause returns terror-stricken.]

Things dire to tell, direful for eyes to see,
 Have forced me from the fane of Loxias,
 So that no strength I have, no power to move;
 But lacking speed of limb, with hands I run;
 For ago, when scared, is nought; a very child.
 Towards the wreath-encircled nook I creep,
 And at earth's navel-stone, behold a man 40
 Defiled before the gods, as suppliant,
 Holding his seat;—his hands still dripping gore,
 His sword now-drawn, his lofty olivo-branch
 With ample fillets piously entwreathed,
 White bands of wool;—for so I speak it plain.
 But lo! before this man, on seats reclined,
 A wondrous company of women sleeps;
 Women? nay, Gorgons let me say; nor yet
 To Gorgonean types compare I them.
 Ere now in paintings [Harpies] I have seen,
 Snatching the meal of Phineus. These to sight 50
 Are wingless, black, and loathsome utterly.
 With breathings unapproachable they snore,
 Forth from their eyes drippeth a loathsome rheum;
 Their garb too vile the effigies to touch
 Of gods immortal, or the roofs of men.
 Tribe of this sisterhood I ne'er have seen;
 Neither may region boast such brood to rear

Scathless, unvisited by penance-throe.
 But for the issue, let lord Loxias,
 Mighty, who rules those seats, himself provide; 60
 For prophet-leech, and portent-seer is he,
 Who can for others purify their homes.

[*Exit PYTHONESS.*

[*The interior of the sanctuary is disclosed, and exhibits the following group. APOLLO appears standing beside ORESTES, who is seated on the Omphalos.* The Furies are reclined on seats, fast asleep. HERMES in the background.*]

APOLLO.

I'll ne'er betray thee: to the end thy guard,
 Beside thee standing, or when far aloof;
 Nor will be gracious to thy enemies.
 And captured now this maddened crew thou seest.
 By sleep the loathsome virgins are o'erpowered,
 Hoary primeval progeny,—with whom
 Nor god, nor man, nor beast, will e'er consort. 70
 For Evil's sake brought forth, in evil gloom
 Of subterranean Tartaros they dwell,
 Abhorred of men and of Olympian gods.
 But hie thee hence, nor e'er relax thy speed,
 For as thou tread'st the wand'ror-trampled earth,
 They'll track thee o'er the ample continent,
 O'er the wide ocean and the citted isles;

* On the hearth [of the Delphian temple] burnt a perpetual fire, and near it was the omphalos, or navel-stone, which was supposed to mark the middle point of the earth—SMITH'S *Classical Geography*.

Reproach among the shades forsakes me not;
 Dire evil I have borne from those most dear, 100
 And yet for me, by matricidal hands
 Ruthlessly slain, no god is moved to wrath.
 Behold these direful heart-wounds, whence they came,
 For clear in sleep the vision of the mind,
 Though unforeseen by day the fate of men.
 My off'rings many a time have ye lapped up,
 Wineless libations, sober, soothing gifts,
 The hallowed feast around the altar-fire,
 At night's dread hour, shared by no other god.
 All these down-trampled now I must behold. 110
 But gone is he, escaping like a fawn,
 And, lightly bounding o'er the hunter's net,
 At you he mocked, with many a scornful jeer
 Hear ye, how, pleading for my life, I speak.
 Awake, dread demons of the lower world;
 For Clytemnestra calls you, I, a dream.

Chorus.

[Moaning.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Moan would ye? but the man is gone, is flown.
 For him are patron-gods, though not for me.

Chorus.

[Moaning.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Soundly ye sleep, and pity not my woo,
 While he, the matricide, Orestes, flies. 120

Chorus.

[Groans.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Groan ye and sleep, nor on the instant rise?
 What have ye done except to work me bale?

Chorus.

[Groans.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Slumber and toil, worthy conspirators,
 Have sorely wasted the fell dragon's might.

Chorus.

[Redoubled and shrill groans.]

*Chorus-leader.** Take heed there.

<i>Furies.</i> 2. 3.	-	-	-	Seize.
4. 5.	-	-	-	Seize.
6. 7.	-	-	-	Seize.
8. 9.	-	-	-	Seize.
10. 11.	-	-	-	Seize.
12. 13.	-	-	-	Seize.
14. 15.	-	-	-	Seize.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

In dreams ye track the game, ye yelp amain,
 Like hound that never intermits the chase.

* Müller, p. 61. These exclamations are uttered by the leader and the other Furies in rapid succession.

What dost thou? Rise, be not subdued by toil,
 Nor yet, relaxed by sleep, to grief be blind.
 By just reproaches let thy heart be stung. 130
 For to the prudent sharp they are as goads.
 †But on thy quarry wafting gory breath,
 Scorch him with fiery vapour from thy maw;—
 Chase hard, with second coursing wear him down.

[*The Ghost vanishes. The Chorus-leader starts from her seat.*]

Leader.

Awake! Awaken her, as I wake thee!
 Sleepest thou still? Arise, and slumber spurn;
 Then try we whether vain our prelude be.

[*The Furies start up one after another from their seats, and range themselves upon the stage, right and left of their leader.*]

Chorus. STROPHE I.

1st *Fury.* Woo! woo! alack! Friends, we have suffered
 scorn.
 2. Much have I suffered and in vain.
 1. Alack! dire anguish we have borne, 140
 Intolerable pain!
 2. Burst from the toils, fled is the game away.
 3. By sleep o'ormastered I have lost the prey.

ANTISTROPHE I.

4. Fie! Son of Zeus! Thou thievish art, I
 throw;
 5. Us, hoary gods, thou youngster ridest down;

4. This godless wight, bitter to parents, thou
 As suppliant dost own.
 5. A god the matricide has fleched away.
 6. That aught heroic is just will any say?

STROPHE II.

7. Voice of reproachful blame, to me in dreams
 that came 150
 Smote me, like chariotceer with scourge grasped
 tight,
 'Neath heart and reins. Such chilly pang I
 8. know
 †As from the public scourger's ruthless blow.

ANTISTROPHE II.

9. The upstart doings these of younger deities,
 Usurping power beyond the sway of right.
 †Dark-smear'd from foot to crown, earth's
 10. navel-stone 160
 Blood's horrible defilement now doth own.

STROPHE III.

11, 12. But Thou, the seer, with hearth-stain hast
 thy shrine
 Polluted, self-invited, self-impelled;
 Revering mortal things 'gainst law divine
 The Fates thou hast dishonoured, grey
 with ehl.

ANTISTROPHE III.

13, 14. †No while he plagues, himself he shall not
 free;

A captive still, though under earth he fled,
For, stained with blood, another after me,
†Avenger stern, shall light upon his head.

APOLLO.

Avaunt, I charge thee, leave these hallowed seats; 170
Depart with speed from this prophetic shrine,
Lest thou,—by winged glistening snake transfixed,
Shot from this golden-twisted cord,—through pain,
Shouldst vomit forth black gore, the clots disgorging
Which thou from slaughtered men hast ruthless sucked.
Thou it befits not to approach these seats,
But where head-lobbing, eye-outscoping rage,
With vengeance that doth sap youth's vital powers,
Where slaughters, mutilations, stonings reign, 180
And where impaled, wretches with cruel throes
Groan forth their anguish. These the feasts ye love,
And therefore are ye hateful to the gods.
Your whole aspect attests it,—such should dwell
In blood-gorged lion's den, not tarry here
Bringing pollution to these hallowed seats.
Begone, ye grially troop, unshepherded,
For to such flock no heavenly power is kind.

Chorus.

Apollo lord, do thou in turn give ear;
No more accomplice art thou in these ills; 190
Rather of all, sole author thou, sole cause.

APOLLO.

How so! To greater length extend thy speech.

Chorus.

The stranger thou didst prompt to matricide.

APOLLO.

To avenge his sire I prompted him; why not?

Chorus.

With promise this new bloodshed to defend.

APOLLO.

And bade him seek as suppliant this shrine.

Chorus.

Then these, his escort, why dost thou revile?

APOLLO.

Because not meet their presence for these seats.

Chorus.

Yet unto us hath been assigned this charge.

APOLLO.

What function this? Extol thy fair employ. 200

Chorus.

All mother-slayers from their homes we chase.

APOLLO.

How if the wife her husband should have slain?

Chorus.

Not one in blood wore she with him she slew.

APOLLO.

Greatly thou dost mispriso and set at nought
 The nuptial bond of Hera and of Zeus;
 Dishonoured too is Kypris by these words,
 From whom to mortals come their dearest joys;
 For, under Justice' shield, the nuptial couch,
 'Twixt man and wife the heaven-appointed bond,
 Is mightier than oath; to wedded pair,
 When one slays other, if thou Ionien be,
 These not pursuing with keen-sighted wrath,
 Not justly then Orestes thou dost chaso;
 For thee, right earnest in his case I find,
 But openly in hers more mild in sooth.
 But Pallas shall both sides with justice scan.

210

Chorus.

Trust me this man never will I let go.

APOLLO.

Pursue him then, prolong thy fruitless toil.

Chorus.

Claim not by word my honours to abridge.

APOLLO.

Honours like thine I would reject with scorn.

Chorus.

For great thy rank before the throne of Zeus.
 But I, led on by matricidal blood,
 To death will chaso this man, and hunt him down.

[Exit Chorus.]

220

APOLLO.

But I will aid, will save, the fugitive;
 For dire with men and gods the suppliant's wrath,
 If I his cause should willingly betray.

[The scene changes to ATHENS, and the temple of APOLLO is transformed into the temple of ATHENA POLIAS on the Acropolis.]

ORESTES, embracing the sacred image of PALLAS.

Athena queen, at Loxias' behest
 I hither come; view kindly one accused,
 Not blood-polluted, nor with hands unclean,
 For blunted now and worn the edge of crime
 At other shrines, and in the paths of men.
 Passing alike o'er continents and seas,
 Obedient to the word oracular
 Of Loxias, thy sacred shrine I reach,
 Thy image, goddess! Taking here my stand,
 I will abide the issue of my cause.

230

[Enter the Leader of the Chorus, followed by the Furies. As they advance they spread themselves out towards both sides of the orchestra.]

Leader.

'Tis well; sure token this, the man is here.
 Follow the leading of this voiceless guide;
 For still we track, as hound the wounded fawn,
 By blood and reeking drops, our destined prey;
 With many a toilsome, man-outwearing gasp

Pant my deep vitals, for on every spot
 Of the wide earth my charge I shophorded, 240
 And now in hot pursuit with wingless flight
 Swift as swift galley o'er the sea I course;
 Here in some nook ensconced the game must lie;
 Odour of human blood I snuff with joy.

[The Furies having taken their stations opposite to one another in the orchestra, sing the following Strophes in responsive order.]

Chorus.

- 1, 2. Look here! Look there!
 Take heed! Beware!
 Lost, scathless in flight, illuding our sight,
 The matricide 'scape unawaro.
 3, 4. Lo! yonder enshrined,
 Round the goddess entwined,
 A verlict he seeks through her aid 'gainst the
 right. 250
 5, 6. But baseless his trust;
 Mother's blood from the dust
 Is hard to recover, as earth-fallen rain.
 7, 8. Lo, suffer thou must
 In requital most just,
 And I from thy members the life-blood will drain.
 9, 10. The red draught I'll taste,
 Thy strength I will waste,
 Then drag thee still living to regions below,
 The forfeit to pay for thy mother's death-blow.

- 11, 12. There thou shalt see in durance drear,
 'Gainst god or guest or parents dear, 260
 Like thee who sinned, receiving their due meed.
 13, 14. For Hades, ruler of the nether sphere,
 Exactest auditor of human kind,
 Graved on the tablet of his mind
 Doth every trespass read.

ORESTES.

To me, long disciplined in woo, are known
 Divers lustrations; when to speak I know,
 When to be silent; but in present need
 By sapient teacher I was charged to speak.
 Pale now and dim the blood-mark on my hand; 270
 Washed clean away the matricidal stain;
 For while yet fresh, by rites of sacred swine,
 At Phœbos' altar it was duly purged;—
 Tedious the tale, were I to reckon o'er
 How many fared with me nor suffered harm.
 Time, as it waxeth, purifieth all;—
 Now, with pure lip, I piously invoke
 Athena, of this region queen, to come,
 My pleader: so she weaponless shall earn
 Myself, my realm, and all the Argive host, 280
 Honestly true, allies for evermore.
 But whether on the distant Libyan plain
 She, by her native wave of Triton stand,
 Or sit, with foot enveloped, to her friends
 Dispensing aid;—or on Phlegraian fields,
 Like warlike leader, marshal her array,—

Oh may she come (a goddess hears from far),
And be my saviour from those miseries.

Chorus.

Thou nor Apollo, nor Athena's might
Avails to save. Spurned by the gods themselves, 290
With heart of joy oblivious, thou shalt pine,
The Furies' blood-sucked victim, a mere shade.—
How! no reply! Dost thou condemn my words,
Thou, fattened for me, thou, my victim doomed,
Slain at no altar, but my living prey?—
Our hymn, as chain to bind thee, thou shalt hear.

[*The Chorus-leader ascends the steps of the altar. The rest of
the Chorus arrange themselves in the orchestra, and sing
the following Strophes.*]

Choral Hymn.

Haste we now the dance to wind,
Since bosoms in dread refrain,
To utter how our bodeful train 300
Deal the lots to mortal kind.
Loyal are we to the Right,—
Hence clean hands whose extendeth,
Scathless still through life he wendeth,
Nor on him our wrath may light.
But who guilty hands doth hide,
Stained with blood,—as yonder wight,—
Lurketh over at his side,
Witness true, this Brood of Night.
Blood-avengers we appear,
Stern-purposed to achieve our doom severe. 310

Full Chorus. STROPHE I.

Oh mother, hear me, Mother Night,
Who brought me forth, a living dread,
To scare the living and the dead,
Latona's son does me despise;—
Stealing away my trembling prey,
Destined a mother's murder to requite.
Now o'er the victim lift the dread refrain,
The Furies' death-hymn, madness-fraught;—
Torch of the brain, from Hades brought,—
Soul-binding, lyreless, mortal-blighting strain.

ANTISTROPHE I.

For Fate unswerving span, that we 320
This office hold for evermore:—
Mortals imbrued with kindred gore
We chase, till under earth they flee;
And when in death they yield their breath,
Not o'en in realm of Hades are they free.
Now o'er the victim lift the dread refrain,
The Furies' death-hymn, madness-fraught;—
Torch of the brain, from Hades brought,—
Soul-binding, lyreless, mortal-blighting strain.

STROPHE II.

For even at birth Fate assigned our career 330
Apart from the gods;—we approach not their sphere;
Their banquets we share not,
Their white robes we wear not,

And Fame proclaims with heavy groan,
The doom, like murky cloud, that wraps a house
o'erthrown.

STROPHE IV.

For such Fate's decree:—awful ministers we,— 360
Keen-eyed to conceive what untired we achieve;
†Of crime ever mindful, obdurate to prayer,
Apart from the gods our loathed mission we bear;—
To living and dead, 'neath our sunless torch-ray,
Dark and rugged our way.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

Who then without fear among mortals can hear
Our Fate-sanctioned warrant, our god-given right? 370
For not with dishonour I wield my dread might,
Although my hear mission, in darkness profound,
I hold 'neath the ground.

[*ATHENA appears in a chariot, and alights.*]

ATHENA.

A voice I heard from far Scamander's banks
Invoking me, what time the land I claimed,—
Fair portion of the booty, spear-achieved,
Which chiefs and leaders of Achaia's host
Apportioned, root and branch, for ever mine,
To Theseus' sons a chosen heritage. 380
Thence have I come, plying unwearied foot,
My swelling Ægis rustling, without wings;
With stalwart coursers harnessed to my car.
And now, beholding here these uncouth guests,

I fear not, yet the marvel takes mine eye.
 Who are ye? I address myself to all,
 To you and also to this stranger here,
 Who as a suppliant at mine imago sits.
 But you, like nothing that is born and dies,—
 Neither of goddesses by gods behold,
 Nor in similitude of mortal shapes;—
 But to speak ill of those who harm us not
 Reason forbids, and Justice stands aloof.

390

Chorus.

Daughter of Zeus, all shalt thou hear in brief.
 The progeny of ancient Night are we,
 "Curses" yelect in homes beneath the earth.

ATHENA.

Your race I know, and titles ominous.

Chorus.

Ay, and my honours quickly shalt thou learn.

ATHENA.

Mine ears are open, be the word but plain.

Chorus.

'Tis ours men-slayers from their homes to chase.

ATHENA.

And to the slayer's flight what goal is fixed?

400

Chorus.

Where to rejoice is not th' appointed doom.

ATHENA.

And to this bourn thou houndest now this man?

Chorus.

Yea, for he chose his mother's blood to shed.

ATHENA.

Urged by no mandate whose strong dread he feared?

Chorus.

Where is the goad should prompt to matricide?

ATHENA.

Two parties plead, one only have I heard.

Chorus.

But neither will he take nor tender oath.

ATHENA.

Repute of justice, not just act, thou wishest.

Chorus.

How? Tell me. For no lack of wit is thine.

ATHENA.

Win not by oaths unjust success, I say.

410

Chorus.

Question thou put, and rightful verdict give.

ATHENA.

Leave ye to me the ruling of the cause?

M

Chorus.

Surely: just homage just regard requites.

ATHENA.

To this what wilt thou in thy turn reply,
O stranger? Tell thy country and thy race,
And thy misfortune, then ward off this blame;
If, trusting in the right, thou thus dost sit
Clasping mine image, near my sacred shrine,
Ixion-like, a suppliant revered,—
To all these queries give me clear reply. 420

ORESTES.

Athena queen! matter of grave import
First will I from thy words last-uttered purge.
Not blood-polluted am I, nor doth stain
Cleave to thine image from thy suppliant's hand.
Sure proof of this will I adduce;—'tis law
That voiceless lives the man defiled by blood,
Till purifier's hand hath him besprong
With victim's blood, slain in life's budding prime.
Long since at other shrines have been performed,
With victims and with streams, these lustral rites. 430
Thus then this care, as cancelled, I dismiss.
My lineage, what it is, thou soon shalt hear.
Argive am I, my sire thou knewest well,
Marshal of naval heroes, Agamemnon,
In league with whom thou madest Ilium,
Troy's proud city, an uncited waste.
The hero home returned, and basely fell;

For him, entangled in a subtle net,
My mother, black of soul, did reave of life;
The bath bore witness to the deed of blood.
Myself, long time an exile, coming home, 440
Slew her who bare me,—I deny it not,—
Avenging my dear father, blood for blood.—
But Loxias is sharer in my guilt,
Who goads of anguish to my heart announced,
Unless the guilty found from me their due.
My deed, or just, or unjust, do thou judge;—
Fare as I may from thee, I'll bow content.

ATHENA.

Too grave the cause for mortal to adjudge,
Nor is it lawful for myself to try
Causes of blood, with such keen issue fraught. 450
Chiefly for this: although, due rites performed,
My shrine thou visitest as suppliant,
Harmless and pure; yet in my city's cause,
Hurtful to it, I claim, thou shalt not be.
For these hold functions hard to set aside,
And not triumphant in their suit, henceforth,
The poison of their hate, falling to earth,
Will to this land breed dire and cureless plague.—
So stands the matter;—each alternative,
For them to stay, for me to banish them,
Is mischief-fraught, nor know I remedy.
But since this weighty cause hath lighted here, 460
Judges of murder, bound by oath, I'll choose,—
Solemn tribunal for all future time.

But for yourselves call witnesses and proofs,—
Sworn evidence collect to aid your suit;
And when, this matter truly to decide,
I from my citizens the best have culled,
Who shun the fraudulent oath, I will return.

[*Exit.**Chorus. STROPHE I.*

Ruin will usher in new laws
Should judgment crown the wrongful cause,
And on this mother-slayer smile;— 470
This deed will mortals reconcile
To license, and from ago to ago,
Parents shall bleed beneath their children's rage.

ANTISTROPHE I.

No more this mortal-watching train
Shall dog the caitiff as of yore;—
To murder I will give the rein. 480
Who tells his neighbour's sorrow o'er,
†Shall hear in turn Grief's anguished moan;
Who comforts other's woe, himself must groan.

STROPHE II.

Let none, 'neath Sorrow's stroke
Writhing, our aid invoke,
Pleading with anguished moan,
"O Justice, Justice, O Erinyes' throne!"
Some father thus may wail,
Some mother smit with bale, 490
Vainly, since Justice' altar lieth prone.

ANTISTROPHE II.

†Throned in the heart let Awe,
Guardian of sacred law,
There hold her steadfast reign!
Well earned is wisdom at the cost of pain.—
But who in blithesome cheer
That lives, absolved from Fear,
Or man, or State, will Justice long revere?

STROPHE III.

Neither life by law unblest, 500
Nor by tyrant yoke oppress,
Sanction thou;—
All extremes the gods detest;
They the golden mean, I trow,
Stamp with might. The truth I speak
Weighty is. Defiant scorn
Is from godless folly born;
While from inward health doth flow,
Beloved of all, true bliss which mortals seek.

ANTISTROPHE III.

This, the sum of wisdom, hear;— 510
Justice' altar aye revere,
Nor ever dare,
Lusting after worldly gear,
With atheist foot to spurn; beware,
Lurketh Retribution near,
Direful issue doth impend;
Honour then with holy fear

Thy parents,—household rights revere,
Nor guest-observing ordinance offend.

STROPHES IV.

But who unforced, with spirit free 520
Dares to be just, is ne'er unblost;
Whelmed utterly he cannot be:
But for the wretch with lawless breast,
Bold seizer of promiscuous prey,—
I warn you,—he, perforce, his sail
Shall strike amid the conquering gale,
When shrouds and yards dismantled own its way.

ANTISTROPHES IV.

He cries, but mid the whirlpool's roar
None heeds him; for the gods deride,
†Eying the boaster, proud no more, 530
Struggling amid the surging tide;
Shorn of his strength he yields to Fate;—
The cape he weathers not, but thrown
On Justice' reef, with precious freight,
He perisheth for aye, unwet, unknown.

[*ATHENA enters at the head of the twelve Areopagites, who take their seats in the orchestra.*]

ATHENA.

Herald, proclaim! Hold back the multitude,
Let Tuscan trumpet, filled with mortal breath,
Piercing the welkin with sonorous blast,
Ring out its brazen summons to the crowd:

For, while this council-hall the jurors fill, 540
Silence to keep availeth, and to learn
(Yea, the whole city and this stranger too)
What laws for time eternal I ordain;
So may the cause be righteously adjudged.

[*APOLLO appears on the stage.*]

Chorus.

Apollo lord, rule thou thine own domain;—
In this affair say, what concern hast thou?

APOLLO.

Twofold my errand here. As witness, first:
For this man at my shrine is suppliant,
Guest of my hearth; by me from murder cleansed.
Also I come as pleader in his cause;
For of his mother's death-blow mine the blame. 550

[*To ATHENA.*]

Now, as thy wisdom prompteth, open thou
The trial, Pallas: legalize the suit.

ATHENA.

[*To the Chorus.*]

'Tis yours to speak;—thus I commence the suit.
Since that the plaintiff, taking first the word,
To state the argument may justly claim.

Chorus.

Though we be many, brief shall be our speech.

[*To ORESTES.*]

Do thou in turn make answer, word for word:—
And first declare,—didst thou thy mother slay?

Orestes.

I slew her, nor have e'er denied the deed.

Chorus.

Thus of three wrestling-bouts the first is ours.

Orestes.

Not prostrate he o'er whom thou mak'st this vaunt. 560

Chorus.

Behoveth thee to tell how thou didst slay.

Orestes.

This hand, my drawn sword wielding, smote her neck.

Chorus.

By whom persuaded, and by whose advice?

Orestes.

By Phœbos' words: he witnesseth for me.

Chorus.

How? did the prophet counsel matricide?

Orestes.

Certes,—nor thus far have I blamed my lot.

Chorus.

But, by the vote condemn'd, thou'lt change thy speech.

Orestes.

My sire, I trust, will aid me from the tomb.

Chorus.

Good: having slain thy mother, trust the dead!

Orestes.

Polluted was she with a twofold stain. 570

Chorus.

How so? Instruct the jurors on these things.

Orestes.

Her husband slaying, she my father slew.

Chorus.

Thou livest,—she through death is murder-free.

Orestes.

Why did ye not then chase her while alive?

Chorus.

Not of one blood with her the man she slew.

Orestes.

But am I with my mother one in blood?

Chorus.

'Twas 'neath her zone she nourished;—blood-stained
wretch,

A mother's dearest blood dost thou disown?

Orestes.

Now bear me witness and expound for me,
Apollo, whether I with justice slew. 580

The deed, as wrought, we do not disavow;—
But whether justly shed, or not, this blood,
Judge thou, that answer I may make to these.

APOLLO.

To you, Athena's great tribunal, now
Justly I'll speak; a prophet may not lie;—
Ne'er from my throne prophetic have I said
Concerning man, or woman, or the state,
What Zeus, Olympian sire, might not ordain.
Learn ye how potent is the plea I urge;—
The Father's will I charge you to obey; 590
For oaths are not of greater force than Zeus.

Chorus.

Zeus, as thou sayest, gave this oracle,
And bade Orestes here, his father's death
Avenging, to despise a mother's rights.

APOLLO.

Unlike the case, when dies a highborn man,
Richly adorned by sceptres Heaven-bestowed,
By woman dies, not from impetuous bow
Of Amazons far-shooting: Pallas, nay!
But as thyself shalt hear, and these convened
Who sit, by ballot to adjudge this cause. 600
For, from the mighty labour, conquest-crowned,
†Her lord with friendly welcome she receives,
The bath he enters; him she covers o'er
With broidered robes, then, tangled in the folds,
Smites him, her husband;—such the hero's death,

By all revered, marshal of naval hosts;—
Hence thus I signalize, their hearts to prick
Who here have mission to decide this cause.

Chorus.

A father's death Zeus honours,—so thou sayest,— 610
Yet he his father, aged Kronos, chained;—
How prove this deed not adverse to thy word?
Here I invoke you, judges, to give heed.

APOLLO.

Oh hateful progeny, of Heaven abhorred!
Fetters he might unloose,—this ill hath cure,
And yields to many a method of release.
But when of murdered man the dust hath once
The blood sucked up, he riseth never more.
No charm hath Zeus, my father, here ordained,
Who all things else upturneth as he will, 620
Nor with the toil panteth his mighty heart.

Chorus.

Against his exile dardest thou to plead?
Shall he, a mother's kindred blood who shed,
Lord it in Argos, o'er his father's house?
What altars of his people may he touch?
How share the lustral water with his tribe?

APOLLO.

Thus I declare, learn ye how just my words.
Not parent of the embryo, but nurse,
Is she, the so-called mother of the child.
The father is the source: as stranger, she 630

For stranger rears the germ, if Heaven blight not.
 Sure warrant of my word I will adduce;—
 A child, though motherless, may see the light;
 Witness this daughter of Olympian Zeus,
 Not nurtured in the darkness of the womb,
 Yet such a scion goddess never bare.
 In will, in action, Pallas, be it mine
 Thy city and thy people to exalt.
 This man I sent, a suppliant to thy shrine,
 That faithful he might be for evermore.
 That, goddess! thou for allies mightest win
 Him and his after-race, and that these pacts
 Might last eternal, blessed by men unborn.

640

ATHENA.

I do command you, as your judgment leads,
 Just verdict give,—of pleadings now enough.

Chorus.

By us in sooth our shafts have all been shot,
 The issue of the cause I wait to hear.

ATHENA.

How may I rule the cause, unblamed by you?

Chorus.

Ye heard what ye have heard;—now with your heart
 Give judgment, strangers, and revere your oaths. 650

ATHENA.

Hear ye my statute, men of Attica,—

Ye who of bloodshed judge this primal cause;
 Yea, and in future age shall Ægeus' host
 Revere this court of jurors. This the hill
 Of Ares, seat of Amazons, their tent,
 What time 'gainst Theseus, breathing hate, they came,
 Waging fierce battle, and their towers upreared,
 A counter-fortress to Acropolis;—
 To Ares they did sacrifice, and hence
 This rock is titled Areopagus.
 Here then shall sacred Awe, to Fear allied, 660
 By day and night my lieges hold from wrong,
 Save if themselves do innovate my laws.
 If thou with mud, or influx base, bedim
 The sparkling water, nought thou'lt find to drink.
 Nor Anarchy, nor Tyrant's lawless rule
 Commend I to my people's reverence;—
 Nor let them banish from their city Fear;
 For who 'mong men, uncurbed by fear, is just?
 Thus holding Awe in seemly reverence, 670
 A bulwark for your state shall ye possess,
 A safeguard to protect your city-walls,
 Such as no mortals other-where can boast,
 Neither in Scythia, nor in Pelops' realm.
 Behold! This court august, untouched by bribes,
 Sharp to avengo, wakeful for those who sleep,
 Establish I, a bulwark to this land.
 This charge, extending to all future time,
 I give my lieges. Meet it is ye rise,
 Assume the pebbles, and decide the cause,
 Your oath revering. All hath now been said. 680

[The first Areopagite rises, takes a pebble from the altar, and drops it into the urn. The rest follow in succession between the following distichs.]

Chorus.

This sisterhood, oppressive to the land,
My council is that ye in no wise shame.

APOLLO.

And I enjoin you, fear mine oracles;
From Zeus they issue, fruitless make them not.

Chorus.

Usurping championship of bloody suit,
No longer shall thine oracles be pure.

APOLLO.

Did then my Father towards Ixion err,
Who first as blood-stained suppliant, sued for aid?

Chorus.

Say on! but I, defrauded in my suit,
In turn will haunt the land, dread visitant. 690

APOLLO.

Alike of younger and more ancient gods
Art thou unhonoured. I the cause shall win.

Chorus.

So whilom wroughtest thou in Phoros' house,
Moving the Fates mortals from death to free.

APOLLO.

Is it not just my votary to save,
Then meet when most his trouble calls for aid?

Chorus.

But thou the prime allotments didst o'errule
With wine deluding the hoar goddesses.

APOLLO.

But thou, full soon, defeated in thy suit,
Wilt spew thy venom, harmless to thy foes. 700

Chorus.

Since thou, young god, o'rriddest my hoar ago,
The issue I await with list'ning ear,
And doubtful stay my wrath against the town.

[After the twelfth Areopagite has dropped his pebble into the urn, ATHENA takes one from the altar, and holds it in her hand.]

ATHENA.

With me it rests to give the casting voto,
And to Orestes I my suffrage pledge.
For to no mother do I owe my birth;
But I, in all save wollock, praise the male.
In very truth I am my father's child,
Nor care I to avenge a woman's death
Who slew her husband, guardian of the house. 710
Orestes, judged by equal votes prevails.*
The pebbles now pour quickly from the urns,
Judges, to whom this office is assigned.

ORESTES.

Phœbos Apollo, how will end this suit?

* Athena's ballot is the mythic expression of the principle, that where Justice is undecided Mercy prevails.—Müller.

Chorus.

O Night, dark mother, seest thou these things?

ORESTES.

The noose awaits me, or to see the light.

Chorus.

Ruin for us, or firm prerogative.

[*The pebbles are poured out of the urn and counted.*]

APOLLO.

Now strangers, count the pebbles with due care;
And while ye tell them o'er, let justice reign;
Lack of right judgment breedeth mighty woe,
The while one suffrage hath a house restored.

720

ATHENA.

This man acquitted is from charge of blood,
For equal are the numbers of the votes.

ORESTES.

Hail Pallas! Hail thou saviour of my house!
The exile, reft of his paternal land,
Thou leadest home: haply some Greek will say,
"The man an Argive is once more, and dwells
On his paternal heritage, by aid
Of Pallas, and of Loxias, and Him,
Third Saviour, mighty consummator, Zeus,"—
Who, honouring my father's death, saves me,
Beholding these my mother's advocates.
Now to my native Argos I depart,
Pledged to this country and thy lieges here

730

By oath to be revered for evermore,
That never helmsman of the Argive State
Shall hither bear the well-appointed spear.
For we, ourselves, though couching in the grave,
On those who violate these present oaths
By sore perplexities will work, and send
In march despondency, in crossing streams 740
Omens averso, till they repent their toil.
But unto those who keep this pledge, and honour
Athena's city with confederate spear,
To them will we be gracious evermore.
Hail goddess, and these city-wardens, hail!
Still may your gripe be fatal to your foes,
While victory and safety crown your spear.

[*Exit.*]*Chorus.*

1. Ye upstart gods, time-honoured laws
Down-riding, ye have seized my prey.
2. But I, dishonoured, stung by grief, 750
Woe, woe, my torture to allay,
On all the ground, will cast around
Venom, whose baleful drops shall cause
Where it doth light a sterile blight,
Fatal alike to germ, to leaf.
The pest, O Justice, scouring o'er the plain,
Shall fling abroad its man-destroying stain.
3. I groan anew; what dare? what do?
My pangs the citizens shall rue;
Alas, most wretched are thy daughters, Night!
Enduring this dishonourable slight. 760

N

ATHENA.

Be moved by me to stay these heavy groans ;
 Not vanquished are ye, nor to your disgrace
 Fell justice, equal-voted, from the urn.
 Besides from Zeus clear oracles were sent,
 And he who uttered them himself avouched,
 Orestes for this deed should know no scath.
 Hurl not your heavy wrath upon this land ;
 Your rage abate, cause not sterility,
 Nor rain your poison-drops, like venom'd darts,
 Ruthless devourers of each tender germ. 770
 For I most righteously do promise you
 Doth sanctuaries and shrines in this just land ;
 Seated at hearths with unctuous off'rings fed,
 And held in honour by my lieges here

Chorus.

1. Ye upstart gods, time-honoured laws
 Down-riding, ye have seized my prey.
2. But I, dishonoured, stung by grief,
 Woo, woo, my torture to allay,
 On all the ground, will cast around
 Venom, whose baleful drops shall cause 780
 Where it doth light a storile blight,
 Fatal alike to gorm, to leaf.
 The pest, O Justice, scouring o'er the plain,
 Shall fling abroad its man-destroying stain.
3. I groan anew ; what dare ? what do ?
 My pangs the citizens shall rue ;
 Alas, most wretched are thy daughters, Night !
 Enduring this dishonourable alight.

ATHENA.

Not slighted are ye, powers august ! through rage
 Curse not with hopeless blight the abode of man.
 I too on Zeus rely ; why speak of that ? 790
 And sole among the gods I know the key
 That opens the halls where scald'd thunder sleeps.
 But such we need not. Be appeased by me,
 Nor scatter o'er the land, from froward tongue,
 The harmful seed that turneth all to bane.
 Of bitter rage lull ye the murky wave ;
 Be venerated here and dwell with me.
 Sharing the first fruits of this ample realm,
 For children offered, and for nuptial rite,
 This word of mine thou wilt for ever praise. 800

Chorus.

1. What ! I endure all this ; alas !
2. I, hoary goddess, dwell forsooth on earth,
 Debascement horrible !
3. Revongo I broothe, unmitigated wrath !
4. Woo, woo ! O earth, alas !
5. What agony of pain creeps o'er my heart !
6. Hear, Mother Night, my passion.
7. Mark for scorn,
 By crafty gods deluded, held for nought,
 Of ancient honour I am basely shorn.

ATHENA.

I'll bear thine anger, for mine elder thou, 810
 And art moreover far more sage than I.
 Yet me, with wisdom, Zeus not meanly dowers.

Chorus.

Wilt thou sure warrant give me for all time?

ATHENA.

I may not pledge what I will not perform.

Chorus.

Thine utterance soothes me;—I relax my wrath. 860

ATHENA.

Established here thou wilt be rich in friends.

Chorus.

What blessings shall we hymn for this thy land?

ATHENA.

Such as, with gracious influence, from earth,
From dew of ocean, and from heaven, attend
On conquest not ignoble. That soft airs,
With sunshine blowing, wander o'er the land;
That earth's fair fruit, rich increase of the flocks,
Fail not my citizens for evermore,
With safety of the precious human seed;—
But, for the impious,—weed them promptly out. 870
For I, like one who tendeth plants, do love
This race of righteous men, by grief unscathed:—
Such be thy charge, Be mine not to endure
That, among mortals, in war's splendid toils,
Athena's city be not conquest-crowned.

Chorus. STROPHÆ I.

Pallas, thy chosen seat henceforth be mine!
No more the city I despise

Which Zous omnipotent and Arcs prize,
Stronghold of gods, altar-protecting shrine
Of Grecian deities,

880

For which, with friendly augury I pray;
Springing to light from earth's dark womb,
May life's fair germs prolific bloom,
Lured by the solar ray.

ATHENA.

I for my citizens with gracious mind
These blessings mediate; these deities
Installing here, mighty and hard to please.
For unto them hath Fate assigned
The destinies to fix of human kind. 890
But whoso findeth them severe
Knows not whence come life's strokes; for crime,
Dread heritage from bygone time,
Doth lead him to these powers august.
Him noiseless Ruin, midst his proud career,
With hostile anger, levels with the dust.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHÆ I.

Here may no tree-destroying mildew sweep,—
(So show I forth my grace),
May no fierce heat within these bounds alight, 900
Blasting the tender buds; no sterile blight,
Disastrous, onward creep.
But in due season here may flocks of worth
Twin yearlings bear; and may this race,
Enriched with treasures of the earth,
Honour the Heaven-sent grace!

ATHENA.

Ye city-guardians do ye hear aright
 What thus she promises. For great the might 910
 Erinyes wields—dread brood of night—
 Alike with Hades and the Olympian Powers;
 O'er men confessed and absolute her reign,
 To some she giveth song, and some she dowers
 With life, tear-blinded, marred by pain.

Chorus. STROPHE II.

Here may there fall no man-destroying blight!
 And ye, great Powers, o'er marriage who preside,
 In wedlock bands each lovely maid unite;—
 Ye too, dread sisters, to ourselves allied, 920
 Awful dispensers of the Right,
 In every human home confessed,
 In every age made manifest,
 By righteous visitations;—aye revered,
 And, everywhere, of doctees most feared.

ATHENA.

While thus ye ratify with friendly zeal
 These blessings to my country, I rejoice,
 And love Persuasion's eye, who moved my voice
 To soothe those stern refusers, passion-stung. 930
 But Zeus hath conquered, swayer of the tongue,
 God of the Forum. Triumphs now for aye
 In noble benefits our rivalry.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

Within this city no'er may civil strife,
 Insatiate of ill, tumultuous roar;
 Nor thirsty dust quaff deep the purple gore
 Of citizens; nor rage, with murder rife,
 Snatch greedily the vengeful knife!
 But studious of the common weal
 May each to each in turn be kind, 940
 Hate may they over with one common mind,
 Which among mortals many a woo can heal.

ATHENA.

Now growing wise, the pathway do they find
 Of tongue propitious. From these shapes of fear,
 I to my lieges see rich gain. For here,
 If ye these gracious ones with gracious mind
 Adore and magnify,—your state and town
 Ye shall for evermore with justice crown.

Chorus. STROPHE III.

Farewell, farewell, enriched with wealth's fair prize,
 Ye citizens, who dwell Zeus' altar near, 950
 Friends to the friendly Virgin,—timely wise;
 'Neath Pallas' wings who rest, her father doth revere.

[ATHENA stations herself at the head of the Chorus in the orchestra, where they are joined by the escort of females with torches.]

ATHENA.

Ye too farewell! Mine is it first to show

Your destined seats and thitherward to lead.
Escorted by the torchlight's sacred glow,
The while in sacrifice the victims bleed
The downward slope descend.

960

Whate'er is baneful to the land restrain,
And conquest's gracious ministry upsend
To this my city. Tutelary train,
Children of Cranaos, it belongs to you,
These alien settlers to their homes to guide;
And with my lieges may there aye abide,
Discernment rightful of the Right and True.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE III.

Farewell once more, my farewell I repeat,
To all in Pallas' city who reside,
Or gods or mortals. Hold in awe my seat,
The fortunes of your life ye never then shall chide.

970

ATHENA.

The utterance of your pious vows I praise;—
And will escort you with the flashing light
Of torches, to your cavernous abodes
'Neath earth, with sacred ministers, who guard
Mine image justly; for, of Theseus' land,
Now let the eye come forth,—illustrious train
Of youths, of women, young or hoar with old,
In festive garb apparelled, vermeil-hued,—
Proceed and let the torch-flame lead the way,
That evermore this gracious sisterhood
May, with events auspicious, bless this land.

980

[During the following Chant the procession leaves the temple
and descends the Acropolis.]

Chorus of the Escort. STROPHE I.

Night's hoary children, venerable train,
With friendly escort leave the hallowed fane.

All.

Rustics, glad shouts of triumph raise.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

In ancient crypts remote from light,
Victims await you and the hallowed rite.

990

All.

People, ring out your notes of praise.

Chorus. STROPHE II.

With promise to this land of blessings rare,
Down the steep path ye awful beings wend,
Rejoicing in the torchlight's dazzling glare.

All.

Your cries of jubilee ring out amain.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

Let torchlights and libations close the rear.
Thus Zeus, all-seeing, and the Fates descend,
To bless these citizens to Pallas dear.

All.

Your cry of jubilee ring out amain.

NOTES.

EUMENIDES.

132. *ἐπουρίσασα τῇ*. This use of *τῇ* for *αὐτῇ* is undoubtedly corrupt in 166 and 337; so, also, as I think, in Agam. 7. I have no index that will tell of other such passages, but I think this ought to be *ἐπουρίσασά τῃ*, i.e., *τινί*, "some one."

155. *βαρὲ τὸ περίβαρυ* is clearly wrong; *βαρύ τι, περίβαρυ*, proposed by Wakefield, is adopted by Schutz and Hermann.

158. For *θρόνον* Dindorf reads *θρόμβον*, which has no syntax. I can believe in *θρόμβος* or *θρόμβοις*, joining *φονολιβῆ* to *ἐμφαλόν*.

166. *καὶ τὸν* is absurd: *ἐαυτὸν* gives the necessary sense; though, if *ἐκλύσεται* admits of being passive, no accusative would be wanted. The simplest single change is *χαυτὸν* for *καὶ τὸν*. But in place of *λυπρὸς* one may suspect *αἰετρὸς*, "guilty."

169. *ἐκείνου* is impossible. Scholefield proposed *ἐξ ἐμοῦ*; *γα*, *ἔκ γ' ἐμοῦ*? Far better Hermann, *ἔστιν εὖ*.

337. Dindorf excellently changes *ἐπὶ τὸν* ὦ to *ἐπιτόνωτος*, and *ὅθ' ἑμοίως* to *ὅσα περ, ὅμως* (perhaps following Hermann); and bolder still, writes *νεύμιον* in place of *ὑφ' αἵματος νίου*. It must be admitted that the last words are a mere interpretation of some adjective whose place they have usurped; but I should look rather for an adjective which did not contain the word *αἷμα*, as *νεοθηγῇ* or *νεοαρδῇ*.

341. In *ἐμαῖσι λαταῖς* I suspect that *ἐμοῖς ἀλίταις*, "my criminals," is hidden. We need such a phrase to make *ἔθνος*

τὸδε clear. The rare word *ἀλίτης* (Homeric *ἀλείτης*) would easily be mistaken.

343. *αἱματοσταγίς* is metrically refuted, but Dindorf's innovations (here and in the strophic line also) are extreme. Leaving the strophic as we find it, *παλλεύκων δὲ πίπλων | ἱμοῖρος ἄκληρος ἐτύχθην*, we must drop out *αἱματοσταγίς*; thereupon we find a trochaic word needful before *ἔθνος*. The lost word may have been *αἶμον* (from *αἷμα*), a rare neuter, which may have seemed to need comment. *Ζεὺς γὰρ ἀξιόμισον (αἶμον) ἔθνος τὸδε λίσχας* completes the metro.

348. *σφαλερὰ* seems to be active, and *καὶ* to have been lost after it: "my limbs, which trip up even swift runners."

352. *κατὰ γὰρ*, if *opposed* to *ὑπ' αἰθέρι*, should be *κατὰ γὰρ*.

363. *ἀτίεται* is against the metro, but is far better sense than *ἀτίετα*. *Ἄτιμ' ἀτίετα λάχῃ* for *ἄτιμ' ἄτιμα λάχῃ* is flat and unnatural. Drop *ἀτίεται* entirely, and the theory of a hiatus in the antistrophe drops with it.

481. *ὑπόδοσιν*, "a diminution," gives a wrong sense: *λήξιν ἐπίδοσιν τε*, "allotment and augmentation," is what we expect; yet *ἐπίδοσιν* would not have been corrupted into *ὑπόδοσιν*. Is it not possible that *λήξιν* is the first allotment of tax, and *ὑπόδοσις* means "after-payment," a second rate, when the first has proved insufficient? [I see that they invent the sense *λήξιν*, *cessation*, for this passage; but surely it is just the opposite of what the context needs.]

492-4. *δεῖ μένιν* for *δαιμαίνει* was a necessary and obvious improvement; but *εὖ* is certainly corrupt. I think that *εὖ καὶ* should be *οἴκοι*, "within," "in the heart," which makes all clear.

497. *Ἀνατρέφω*, "rearing, nursing up," is unsatisfactory in sense, and questionable in metre. As it seems to be a comment upon *ὑπὸ στήνι*, I suspect that the poet wrote *ἀναστρέφω*, of which a first corruption was *ἀναστρέφω*.

531. *τὸν οὐπον' αὐχούντ'*.—I think *οὐπον'* should be *οὐκεί'*.

602. *τὰ πλείστ' ἀμείνον' εὐφροσιν*.—*Ἀμείνον'* is obvious! y

corrupt, but εὐφροσιν is attacked by the older editors. βουλαῖς εὐφροσιν would give excellent sense. In ἀμείνους we must look for some word like μελέταις or ἀμύλλαις.

ἡμποληκότεν | τὰ πλείεσθ' ἀμύλλαις εὐφροσιν

does not ill describe Agamemnon. But as ἡμποληκότεν is a mercantile metaphor, the poet may have said ἀμοιβαῖς εὐφροσιν. In either case we join δεδεγμένη δροίτη, and there is no necessity for supposing a line lost.

697. I think that Faehs has truly restored the poet's hand, in reading πάλαι τὰς δαίμονας, and ἀρχαίας νίος.

802. Admitting τε after κατὰ for metrical reasons, I think it hurts the sense to change γῆν to γῆς. I would punctuate it, ἐμὶ παλαιόφρονά! κατὰ τε γῆν οἰκεῖν | ἀτίετον!—φύ, μύσος!

895. σιγῶν (without a connective preceding) seems to be unnaturally abrupt and obscure. The text of the two preceding lines is very doubtful, which increases the difficulty of suggestion here; but I have thought that 894, 895, ought to be in reverse order, so as to give—

πρὸς τὰςδ' ἀπάγει σιγῶν δεσποτ.—

τὰ γὰρ ἐκ προτέρων ἀπλακῆματά νιν

καὶ μέγα φωνοῦντ'

ἰχθραῖς ὀργαῖς ἀμαθύνει.

If this were admitted, one might further suspect that πλῆγαι in 893 should be πλῆγαις. But if words are lost, as is generally supposed, it may be with such syntax as—

πλῆγαι βιάτου [παίουσ', ὅτε περ]

πρὸς τὰςδ'

943. ἀρα φωνοῦσαι—εὐρίσκουσ'; in 3rd p. pl. seems alone natural to the context.

F. W. N.

THE PERSIANS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHORUS OF PERSIAN ELDERS.
ATOSBA, MOTHER OF XERXES.
GHOST OF DARIUS.
XERXES.
MESSENGER.

[SCENE.—SUSA, before the Palace of the Persian kings.
*The Thymele** arranged to represent the tomb of Darius.
Enter a procession of Persian Elders forming the Chorus.]

* The thymele was a raised platform in the centre of the orchestra, which served as resting-place for the Chorus when it took up a stationary position.—K. O. Müller.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS drama, founded upon the Persian War, and produced only seven years after its termination (B.C. 472), is invested with peculiar interest, not only as the earliest Æschylean drama which has come down to us, but also as our earliest extant Greek history, the first recorded recitation of Herodotus having taken place at the great Panathenæa at Athens (B.C. 416). It exhibits, moreover, the same principles of dramatic art, and the same conceptions respecting the divine government which characterise the purely imaginative productions of the "warrior-bard." For its full appreciation we must endeavour to realise the magnitude of the struggle which it commemorates, together with the momentous consequences to Hellas and to the world which resulted from the Hellenic victory.

About eighty years before the battle of Salamis (fought B.C. 480) the Persians had made their first appearance in history, when, under their leader, Cyrus, they overthrow the empire of the Medes (B.C. 559). Within this comparatively brief interval they had brought under subjection not only the native peoples of Asia, but also large areas of Europe and

Africa. At the time of our drama their empire extended southward over Egypt to Cyrenaica, while to the north it comprised Maritime Thrace, Paconia, and apparently Macedonia, as far as the borders of Thessaly, besides nearly all the islands of the Ægean, north of Krete and east of Eubœa. Their ambition expanded with their conquests, till, at length, they aspired to universal dominion. "The conquest of Greece was represented by Xerxes as carrying with it that of all Europe, so that the Persian empire would become co-extensive with the Æther of Zeus, and the limits of the Sun's course."

The idea upon which this colossal empire was based was that of the despotic force of personal will, involving obligation of universal personal service, especially in war. During the expedition of Xerxes the tributaries of the Persian king were virtually slaves, working under the lash, and driven on to the charge in battle with the scourge. The profound humiliation of the subject peoples is forcibly depicted by the Chorus, in the ode wherein they lament the overthrow of the Persian power (v. 586).

Meanwhile, in the heart of Hellas, a new phase of political life had been developed; Athens had thrown off the yoke of her tyrants, the Pisistratids, and the world saw, for the first time, a state composed of free and equal citizens. The revolution of Kleisthenes had established the principles of free speech and equal law, while as yet this new-born liberty had not degenerated into licence. Adverting to the Athenian con-

stitution at the time when the Persians made their attack on Hellas, Plato says, "Reverence was then our queen and mistress, and made us willing to live in obedience to the laws." The strength of patriotic sentiment generated by the new constitution inspired the amazing courage required in the Athenians to encounter the hitherto unconquered hosts of Persia; upon the plain of Marathon they triumphed, and their glorious victory arrested, for a time, the encroachments of the Persian king.

His son Xerxes undertook to avenge the disaster which had befallen the Persian arms: after enormous preparations, he set forth on his expedition, at the head of an army composed of forty-six different nations, each with its distinct national costume and local leaders, while eight other nations furnished the fleet. Well might the contemporary world be overawed by the spectacle of so prodigious an armament, and regard the cause of Hellenic independence as desperate.

The victory of Salamis shattered the power of the barbarians, and changed the destiny of the world.

"Let there be light!" said Liberty,
And, like sunrise from the sea,
Athens arose."

In celebration of the victory thus achieved by struggling and triumphant freedom, and in honour of the city of Pallas, which had won immortal glory at Salamis, Æschylus composed his drama of "The Persians." It has been justly remarked that "Æschylus is the prophet of Greek tragedy." "A

while the first and third, together with the Satyric drama, draw their materials from mythological sources, it appears almost certain that those apparently incongruous elements constituted together one grand poetic whole; the leading idea giving unity to the detached dramas being the struggle between Asia and Europe, which, originated in the dim ages of mythology, had at length culminated in the triumph of Hellas over the non-Hellonic races. In the same manner Herodotus has based his history upon the notion of a primeval enmity subsisting between the Hellenes and the nations of the East. This apparent incongruity vanishes when we remember that the contemporaries of Æschylus cherished the firmest belief in the existence of their legendary heroes, whose protection and assistance were continually invoked, while their appearance on the scene of action, with superhuman stature and imposing mien, was hailed as an omen of victory. Æschylus has, moreover, in the second member of the trilogy, so treated the events of contemporary history as to bring them into harmony with the occurrences of the mythical past, invested, as it was, in the popular imagination, with a halo of glory and sublimity. This was rendered possible by the remoteness of Persia, which was selected as the scene of the drama; by the gorgeous splendour which surrounded Oriental life; by the vastness of the armies assembled under the sceptre of the great king, together with the strangeness of the barbaric physiognomy and costume. "These, exaggerated to

war: Æschylus would probably give greater scope to the prophecies of Phineus, and would thus have an opportunity of carrying back the imagination of the audience to the traditionary commencement of the great struggle which had recently been brought to so glorious a termination. Thus, according to Welcker, the mythological drama of Phineus would form a kind of prophetic prelude to the historical drama of "The Persians."

Reference has already been made to the tendency of Æschylus to group together a long series of events, having reference to some connecting principle. It might therefore excite surprise that, in treating so momentous a subject as the Persian war, he should have contented himself with celebrating the battle of Salamis alone, which, however glorious for Athens, left the fate of Hellas still undecided. This would be brought home with peculiar force to the Athenians who, only ten months after the retreat of Xerxes, had been obliged to migrate a second time to Salamis, while Athens became once more the head-quarters of their dreaded foe. The victory of Plataea, which insured the final deliverance of Hellas, would therefore be regarded as second in importance only to Salamis. Moreover, in the drama of "The Persians," the ghost of Darius alludes to the battle-field of Plataea on which the ruin of the Persian host was to be consummated, as the just punishment inflicted by Zeus upon their impiety and overweening thoughts.

This prophecy alone would suggest the probability of

some reference being made to this important victory in the third member of the trilogy, the *Glaukos Potniaia*. According to popular tradition Glaukos was a fisherman, who became a marine demigod by eating of the divine life-giving herb sown by Kronos: one version of the legend represents him to have been one of the Argonauts, who, having fallen from his galley, suffered this transformation. The so-called grotto of Glaukos was situated near the little town of Anthedon in Boeotia: this marine deity, accompanied by strange monsters of the sea, was accustomed, once a year, to visit the surrounding coasts and islands, and there to prophesy impending calamity. His approach was anticipated by the fishermen, by whom he was held in peculiar veneration, who also offered sacrifice and prayers to avert the threatened woe. It is mentioned by Pausanias (ix. 22, 6), that what Pindar and Æschylus heard from the dwellers at Anthedon concerning this marine deity had furnished materials to both poets, and had sufficed to Æschylus for the creation of a drama. According to Welcker, the extant fragments of this drama seem to indicate that Glaukos describes a voyage which he made from Anthedon to Sicily. Passing the promontory of Eubœa, the shore of Zeus Kenæus, and the tomb of the unhappy Lichas (frag. 27), he came to Rhegium (frag. 31, 189; Herm. p. 12), and arrived finally at Himera (frag. 28) in Sicily. In the neighbourhood of this city was fought the battle of Himera, on which occasion the Sicilian Hellenes repulsed the

Carthaginian invaders, whose attack took place simultaneously with that of Xerxes upon Hellas. It is hardly to be supposed that Æschylus would introduce into his drama the name of Himora without commemorating a victory, which his contemporary, Pindar (Pyth. i. 152), represents as not inferior in importance to those of Salamis and Plataea, the circumstances of which also were peculiarly susceptible of poetic treatment. The Boeotian sea-god, moreover, would form the most appropriate herald of the Boeotian victory, and thus, in his third drama, Æschylus would have the opportunity of bringing the battles of Himora and Plataea into connection with that of Salamis, which formed the main feature in the Persian trilogy.

The plastic art of the Hellenes illustrates their tendency to regard the successive victories of Hellas over Oriental barbarism as phases of the great struggle between the higher and lower elements of civilization, which formed so prominent a feature in their mythology. Thus, in the temple of Hera, at Mycenæ (Paus. xi. 17, 3), and in that of Zeus at Agrigentum (Diod. xi. 82), the capture of Ilium was associated with the overthrow of the giants by the Olympian gods.* Their recent splendid victories would doubtless be similarly regarded by them as the ultimate triumph of civilization over barbarism, brought about by the intervention of the higher powers. This conception has found artistic expression in the beautiful painting on the so-called Darius vase, "on which the celestial

* Welcker.

deities are represented as consoling the terrified Hellas in face of the threatening purposes and preparations of the mighty king of Asia." Moreover, "out of the gigantic block of Persian marble at Rhamnus, three leagues from Marathon, which the Persians are said to have intended for a trophy, Phidias (also a prophet) created one of the most sublime of the Greek statues of the gods, that of Nemesis, whose stern form and gesture admonished the Greeks: 'Be not lifted up; to God alone belongs the glory!'"*

It may be remarked, in conclusion, that this drama, by the profound humiliation of Xerxes, strikingly enforces the Hellenic principle that the supreme intelligence, which Æschylus invariably identifies with the will of Zeus, cannot suffer any inferior power, human or divine, to overpass its legitimate limits, and thus interfere with the harmonious working of the whole. At the same time the dignity of the Persian empire is vindicated by the description of the glorious and happy life which the Persians enjoyed under the rule of Darius, which had been forfeited by their impiety in acting in opposition to the divine decrees; moreover, by introducing the ghost of the mighty king, not only as the stern rebuker of his son's overweening pride, but also as deprecating in the most emphatic manner any subsequent invasion of Hellas, we see, in this early historical drama, an approach to the great principle of classical dramatic art, which finds its

* Bunsen's 'God in History.' Translated by Miss Winkworth.

The Persians.

Such were Amistres, Artaphren,
 Astasp and Megabazes,—they,
 Marshals of Persia, kings themselves,
 But to the mighty King submiss,
 Speed forth, o'erscers of vast array,
 With arrow puissant, borne on steeds,
 Fearful to sight and dread in fight,
 Through their high-souled resolve

And steed-exultant Artembar,
 Masistres and Imacus brave,
 Puissant with bow; Pharaudakes,
 Sosthānes too, steed-driver;
 Others Nile's vast, life-teeming wave
 Sent to the war; Susiskānes,
 And Pegastigon, Egypt-born,
 Him too who sacred Memphis sways,
 Mighty Arsimes; Ariomard,
 Whose rule Ogygian Thebes obeys;
 And rowers from the marshy shore,
 Their barks who guide with sturdy oar,
 Well-skilled, a countless host.

And Lydians, a luxurious train,
 Who the whole native people hold,
 Of Asia's mainland; these the twain,
 Metragathes and Arkteus brave,
 Kingly commanders, lead to war,
 Sent forth by Sardis rich in gold,
 Mounted upon full many a car,

The Persians.

207

With steeds yok'd three and four abreast,
 Terrific to behold.

And dwellers sacred Tmolos near
 On Hellas rush the yoke to cast
 Of bondage;—Mardon, Tharubis,
 Dread anvils of the spear;
 And Mysians skilled the dart to throw;
 While Babylon, the golden, sends
 Her motley throng, which sweeps along,
 Some upon galleys borne, and those
 Whose valour trusts the bow.

50

Thus 'neath the King's commandment dread
 Each sabre-wielding race has sped
 From Asia's every reign.

Such bloom of men from Persia's plain
 Hath gone, and all the Asian earth,
 Yearning for those whom from their birth
 She fostered, groans amain;
 While wives and parents count each day,
 Still trembling at the long delay.

60

STROPHÆ I.

Already hath the royal host,
 Spoiler of cities, gained the adverse coast;
 O'er cordage-fastened raft * the channel they

* Darius, about thirty-five years before, had caused a bridge to be thrown over the Thracian Bosphorus, and crossed it in his march to Scythia; but this bridge, though constructed by the Ionians, and by a Samian Greek, having

ANTISTROPHE II.

And none of valour proven against the mighty
stream 90
May stand a living bulwark, and that fierce billow
stem,
For Persia's host resistless is, and her stout-hearted
men.

MESOPHE.

But ah! what mortal baffle may *
A god's deep-plotted snare,—
Who may o'erleap with foot so light?
†Atō at first, with semblance fair, 100
Into her toils allures her prey,
Whence no more mortal wight
May break away.

STROPHE III.

In olden time by Heaven's decree
Fixed was the Persians' destiny;—
Tower-battering war was theirs by Fate,
The turmoil when stood-mounted foes
In shock of battle fiercely close,
And cities to make desolate. 110

* The sudden transition of the Chorus from unbounded confidence to gloomy foreboding is characteristic of the religious conception common alike to Greek and Persian in the Æschylean age, namely, that the gods cherished a jealous enmity towards vast power and overweening aspirations in men.

ANTISTROPHE III.

Now have they learned firm gaze to cast
 On the vexed sea, what time the blast
 Makes hoary its broad-furrowed plain.
 Confide they now in naval craft,
 Cables fine-wove, device to waft
 Armies across the main.

STROPHE IV.

Hence, swartly robed, my heart by fear
 Is tortured, lest ere long the State—
 Woe for the Persian army! hear
 That Susa's mighty fort is desolate.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

And Kissia's stronghold shall reply
 Beat unto beat on doleful breast,
 While crowds of women raise the cry,
 Woe! woe! and rend their flaxen-tissued vest.

STROPHE V.

For all the troops that draw the rein,
 And all who tread the dusty plain,
 Like swarming bees, with him who led
 Their martial host, abroad have sped,
 The bridge-joined headlands crossing o'er,
 Washed by the sea, that link each adverse shore.

ANTISTROPHE V.

And yearning love with many a tear
 The couch bedeweth, lone and drear;

The wives of Persia, stooped in woe,
 Lament, of their dear lords bereft,
 For her fierce spouse against the foe 110
 Each sent spear-armed, and mourns unmated left.

But Persian elders, come,
 And seated in our ancient hall of state
 Devise we counsel, with deep-thoughted care,
 For great in sooth the need;—
 How haply fares our king,
 Darius' seed,
 Xerxes, from him derived whose name we bear.
 On bending of the bow doth conquest wait?
 Or hath the night 150
 Of iron-headed spear-shaft won the day?

[ATOSSA is seen approaching in a royal chariot, attended by a
 numerous train.]

But lo, in brightness like the eyes of gods,
 Comes forth a light—
 The mother of my royal lord, my queen.
 Do we obeisance, falling at her feet;
 Yea, it behoves us all
 With words of salutation her to greet.

[They prostrate themselves before her, touching the earth with
 their foreheads.]

Of Persia's deep-zoned daughters supreme in rank,
 O Queen,
 Hoar mother of King Xerxes, spouse of Darius, hail!

Once consort, now the mother of Persia's god art
 thou,
 Unless our ancient fortune abandons now the host. 160

ATOSSA.

Therefore I come forsaking our gold-tricked palace
 halls,
 The common nuptial chamber, Darius' and mine
 own.
 No too at heart care rendeth: my thoughts to you
 I'll speak,
 Being by no means fearless touching myself, O
 friends,
 Lost mighty wealth retreating, o'erturn with foot of
 haste,
 Fortune which great Darius not without Heav'n
 upreared.
 No care, all words surpassing, twofold my bosom
 rends,
 Small the honour yielded to wealth, if men be
 lost,
 Right to strength proportioned, shines not where
 riches fail.
 Wealth may none disparage, but for our Eye we
 fear, 170
 For I the master's presence esteem the eye of home.
 Therefore since Fate hath ordered that thus affairs
 should stand,
 To my advisors, Persians, mine aged, trusty, friends;
 For all my hope of counsel is contrid now in you.

Chorus.

Queen of this land, know surely, thou needest not
 speak twice,
 Or word, or deed, if warrant our will gave of our power,
 For we to counsel summoned, devoted are to thee.

ATOSSA.

Ever by nightly visions, manifold,*
 Have I been haunted, since, intent to raze
 Ionia's land, my son led forth his power. 180
 But never saw I dream so manifest
 As that of yesternight;—I'll tell it thee.
 Methought two women came before my sight,
 Richly apparelled, this in Persian robes
 Was habited, but that in Doric garb;
 In height above their sex pre-eminent,
 Faultless in beauty, sisters of one race.
 As Fatherland the one by lot had gained
 Hellas, the other the Barbaric land.
 Between these twain, for so methought I saw, 190
 Some foul arose, which learning, straight my son
 Strove to appease and soothe; he to his car
 Yoked them, and placed the collar on their necks.
 Proudly the one exulted in this gear,
 And kept her mouth submissive to the reins;
 Restive the other was; she with her hands
 The chariot-harness rends, then, without bit,

* The narrative of Atossa recalls the premonitory dream
 which, according to Herodotus, was sent by the gods to
 Xerxes and Artabanus prior to their expedition against
 Greece.

ATOSSA.

Is the bow-stretching arrow conspicuous in their hands?

Chorus.

Nay, lances for close fighting, and equipage of shield.

ATOSSA.

And who then is their shepherd? Who lords it o'er
their host?

Chorus.

To no man are they vassals, nor yield they to command.

ATOSSA.

How then, if foe invade them, may they the shock
sustain?

Chorus.

So that Darius' army, gallant and large, they quelled.

ATOSSA.

Dreadful thy words to parents whose sons to war are
sped.

Chorus.

But soon, if I mistake not, thou the whole truth shalt
learn,

For here a courier speedeth whose gait proclaimeth him
Persian, and he will bring us clear news of weal or
woe.

250

[Enter MESSENGER.]

MESSENGER.

O fenced homes of all the Asian earth,
O soil of Persia, haven of vast wealth,

How by one stroke our full prosperity
 Hath shatter'd been, and blighted Persia's flower.
 Woeful his office first who heralds woe!
 Yet all our sorrow must I needs unfold.—
 Persians! the whole barbaric host is lost.

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Grievous, O grievous woe, 260
 Strange, dismal overthrow,
 Weep, Persians, hearing of this dreadful blow.

MESSENGER.

Yonder our all is ruined utterly
 Myself, past hope returning, view the light.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

Oppressed by weight of years,
 Too long our life appears,
 When this unlooked-for woe assails our ears.

MESSENGER.

Present myself, not hearing others' words,
 Persians! I can report what ills befall.

Chorus. STROPHE II.

In vain, alas, in vain, 270
 That many-nationed, diverse-weaponed band,
 Against illustrious Hellas' land,
 From Asia sped amain.

MESSENGER.

Corpses of men ill-fated choke the coasts
 Of Salamis, and all the region near.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

Woe for their end forlorn!
 The bodies, thou dost say, of dear ones lost,
 Full oft immersed, in death are tost,
 By floating robes upborne.*

MESSENGER.

Nothing our bows availed; but all our host 280
 Perished, by shock o'ercome of naval prow.

Chorus. STROPHE III.

Shriek out a bitter wail
 For those in death laid low;
 How have the gods in all things wrought us bale!†
 Woe for the perished army! woe!

MESSENGER.

O, Salamis, most hateful name to hear!
 Athens, alas! remembering thee I groan.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE III.

O Athens, name of dread
 To foes! For we recall

* *πλεγκτοῖς ἐν διπλάκισσιν*. These words have given rise to a variety of interpretations. They have been supposed to refer to the ebbing and flowing surface of the tide; to the two opposite shores of the strait; to the twofold surface of land and sea; to fragments of wrecked ships, &c. The word *διπλαξ* is however known in Homer as a double cloak (cloak with cape), and in the context most probably refers to the floating mantles of the slain.

† *πάντα*. So Hermann for *παντα*, and he also adds *θεοι*, to complete both sense and metre, from a gloss in one MS.—Paley.

How many wives of Persia vainly woe, 290
Through thee now mateless, on their husbands
call.

ATOSSA.

Long have I silence kept, struck down by ills,
Wretched :—for so transcendent this mischance,
Our grief may be nor told nor questioned of.
Yet mortals needs must bear calamities
Sent by the gods ; wherefore, our sum of loss
Unfolding, though thou groanest at our ills,
Yet in well-ordered narrative rehearse
Who hath from death escaped ; whom must we wail
Of princely leaders that the truncheon held
But now have left their post unmanned, forlorn. 300

MESSENGER.

Xerxes himself still lives and sees the light.

ATOSSA.

Great light, in sooth, thou speakest to my house,
And after murky night clear shining day.

MESSENGER.

But Artambar, captain of myriad horse,
Against the rude Silenian shores is dashed ;
And Dadaces, the chiliarch, spear-struck,
Forth from his galley leapt with nimble bound.
And Tenagon, of Bactria's true stock
Bravest, the sea-lash'd isle of Ajax haunts.
Lilaïos, Arsames, Argestes, these 310
Round the dove-nurturing island overpowered,

MESSENGER.

Had conquest waited upon numbers, queen,
 Then Persia's ships were victor, for the fleet 340
 Of Hellas counted but three hundred ships,*
 And other ten selected, in reserve.
 But Xerxes, this I know, led fifty score,
 While those for swiftness most pre-ominent
 Two hundred were and seven: such the tale.
 Soon wo to thee the weaker in this battle?
 Rather some power divine destroyed the host,
 The scale depressing with unequal fortune.
 Gods save the city of the goddess, Pallas.

ATOSSA.

Is then the Athenians' city still unsack'd?† 350

* The combined fleet which had now got together at Salamis consisted of 366 ships. . . . We may doubt, however, whether this total, borrowed from Herodotus, be not larger than that which actually fought a little afterwards at the battle of Salamis, and which Æschylus gives decidedly as consisting of 300 sail, in addition to ten primo and choicer ships. That great poet, himself one of the combatants, and speaking in a drama represented only seven years after the battle, is better authority on the point even than Herodotus. —*Goetz's History of Greece.*

† The sufferings endured by the Athenians in consequence of the Persian occupation of Attica, when the temples of the Acropolis were pillaged, and all its buildings, sacred as well as profane, were consigned to the flames, were so recent and terrible, that any direct allusion to them would have jarred upon the feelings of a large portion of the audience. We cannot but admire the skill of the poet in evading the question which he attributes to the Persian queen.

MESSENGER.

Her sons surviving, she firm bulwark hath.

ATOSSA.

But how began the sea-fight? Who did first
 The onset lead, the Hellenès or my son,
 Proud of innumerable galleys? Tell me this.

MESSENGER.

All our disaster, Queen! from spirit of ill
 Or vengeful power, none knoweth whence, began.
 For a Helleno from out the Athenian host
 Came to thy son, to Xerxes, with this tale,*
 That when the gloom of dusky night set in,
 The Hellenès would not stay, but, springing straight
 On to the benches of their ships, would seek, 360
 Some here, some there, safety by secret flight.
 But he, when he had heard, perceiving not
 The Hellenic guile, or envy of the gods,
 To all his captains issues this command;
 When with his beams the sun to scorch the earth
 Should cease, and darkness hold the expanse of sky,
 Their squadrons they should marshal in three lines,
 Guarding the outlets and the hilly straits,
 And others station around Aias' isle:— 370
 For did the Hellenès 'scape a wretched fate,

* Allusion is here made to the desperate stratagem of Themistoclès, by which he thwarted the resolution of the Grecian leaders to remove the fleet to the Isthmus, a resolution which, if taken, would have involved the ruin of the Hellenic cause.

Finding by stealth an outlet for their ships,
 The headsman straight should punish the neglect.*
 Such words he spake from mind infatuate,
 For what impended from the gods he know not.
 And they, without disorder, but with minds
 Obedient to command, their meal prepared,
 And round true-fitting lock each mariner
 Strapp'd well his oar. But when the sunlight waned
 And night came on, each master of an oar † 380
 Embarked, and every captain of marines,
 And, line still cheering line of galleys long,
 Forth sail they, as to each had been prescribed.
 And through the live-long night the admirals,
 With naval force entire, cruised to and fro.
 Darkness advanced, yet not in secret flight
 Ionia's host was minded to escape;
 But when white-steoded Day, bright to behold,
 Tackl'd the wide earth from the Hellenès first,
 Like joyous chant, rang out their battle-cry, 390
 And forthwith Echo, from the island rocks,
 Sent back responsive an inspiring shout.
 On all the Persians, cheated in their hopes,
 Fell terror; for by no means as in flight
 Their solemn psalm did th' Hellenès sing.
 But with stout courage speeding to the fray.

* In illustration of this command, reference may be made
 to the wrath of Xerxes when apprised of the destruction
 of the first bridge of boats thrown over the Hellespont, when
 he caused the heads of the chief engineers to be struck off.

† The phrase in the original probably means "each boat-
 man of a crew."

'Gainst famous Athens hath my son devised;
 Nor did the deaths suffice of Asia's host
 Whom Marathon destroyed; for them my son
 Thought to exact requital, but instead,
 Upon himself hath drawn this host of ills.
 But speak, the ships that have destruction 'scaped,— 480
 Thence where didst leave? Canst this distinctly tell?

Messengers.

Of the surviving ships the captains straight
 Before the wind took flight in disarray.
 But of the host the remnant met their death
 In the Boeotians' land. Some pressed with thirst
 Round sparkling fount, some breathless, spent by toil,*

• • • • •
 Thence crossed we over to the Phocian land,
 To soil of Doris and the Molian gulf,
 Whose plain Spercheios' stream with kindly draught
 Waters; thereafter us, straitened for food, 490
 Homes of Thessalian men received, who hold
 Achaian soil; there died the greater part
 Of thirst and hunger, for both ills befel.
 Magnesia and the Macedonian land
 Traversed we then, far as to Axios' ford,
 To Bolbo's marshy rood, and to the height
 Of Mount Pangaios and the Edonian land;
 But on that night, winter, out of due time,
 Some god aroused, who Strymon's holy stream
 Through its whole course congealed; then who before

* A passage of some length has been lost from the original.

The gods had held for nought, with fervent prayers 500
 Invoked them now, bowing to earth and sky.
 When from their orisons the host had ceased,
 Over the stream's firm crystal straight they cross;
 Then those among us who their march began
 Ere the god darted forth his rays, were saved,
 For, flaming with his beams, the sun's bright orb
 Pierced the mid river, warming with his blaze.
 Then each on other fell, and blest was he
 Whoever earliest snapt the breath of life.
 But the poor remnant, they who safety found, 510
 Hardly, with many a labour crossing Thrace,
 Rescued, arrive, not many, to a land
 Of hearths domestic. Now let Susa groan,
 Sore yearning for our country's much-loved youth.
 True are these things, but many ills untold
 I leave, which God upon the Persians hurled.

Chorus.

O baleful Genius! with what heavy weight
 Thy feet have trampled on all Persia's race!

Atossa.

Ah, woe is me for ruin of the host!
 Oh nightly vision manifest in dreams, 520
 To me how surely didst thou ills portend!

To the Chorus.

But ye too lightly did interpret it.
 Naughtless, since your response did sanction this,
 First, I desire to supplicate the gods;

Of fortune smoothly glides, fondly they trust
That aye auspicious will her breezes prove,
So now to me are all things full of fear ;
Woes sent of Heaven are present to mine eyes ;
Rings in mine ear a cry, no pean strain :
Such terror from these evils scares my soul.
Wherefore without my cars and wonted pomp,
Once more I issue from my home, and bring 610
To my son's royal sire, libations kind,
What'er is soothing to the honoured dead.
White milk, sweet draught from hoifer undefiled ;
The flower-distiller's dew, translucent honey,
And crystal water drawn from virgin spring ;
Here joyance too I bring of ancient vine,
Draught unadulterate from mother wild ;
From pale green olive-tree, that while it lives
With constant leafage blooms, this odorous fruit ;
And wreathed flowers, brood of all-teeming Earth. 620
But, O my friends, chant ye well-omened hymns
O'er these libations offered to the dead ;
Darius' mighty ghost do ye invoke,
While I, these honours, which the earth shall drink,
Myself will send to doities below.

Chorus.

O royal lady, to whom Persians bow,
Do thou, to halls below, libations send,
While we in solemn lay
Those who escort the dead will pray
Beneath the earth their gracious aid to lend.

Dread Powers who dwell below, 630
 Hermes and Earth and Thou,
 Monarch of Hades, do ye now
 His spirit to the light upsend ;
 For, if a cure for these dire ills he know,
 Alone of mortals he may speak the end.

STROPHE I.

Me doth our blessèd, godlike monarch hear,
 Pouring these varied doleful notes of woe,
 Broken by sighs ?
 To him is my barbaric utterance clear,
 Telling our wretched griefs in piercing cries ? 640
 Me doth he hear below ?

ANTISTROPHE I.

But thou, O Earth, and ye dread powers of night,
 Send from your sunless realms to upper air
 A shade of might ;
 The monarch, Susa-born, the Persians' god,
 Upend ye, — Him whose equal Persia ne'er
 Hath shrouded 'neath her sod.

STROPHE II.

Dear was the hero, dear his tomb,
 For dear the manners it doth hide ; 650
 Aidoneus, thou, from nether gloom,
 Escort and guide,
 Aidoneus, hear our prayer, —
 † The king of Persians send, true king, to upper air.

With stroke redoubled, whelm'd our land forlorn?
 All her lost triremes we deplore,
 No triremes now, alas, no, never more.

[*The Ghost of DARIUS rises.*]

DARIUS.

O faithful of the faithful, ye whilome
 My youth's companions, elders of Persia, say
 With what sore travail travaileth the state?
 The land, breast-smitten and with furrow'd cheek,*
 Moaneth, and I, beholding near my tomb 680
 My consort, troubled am, but graciously
 Her offerings I received; ye also stand
 Lifting the dirge beside my sepulchre,
 And, shouting loud with shade-evoking strains,
 Piteously call me: but the upward path
 Lies not too open: for the gods below
 More ready are to seize than to let loose.
 Yet, rank among them holding, I am come;
 But haste, that time rebuke not my delay.
 What this new ill that weighs the Persians down?

* *στρέει, κίκοιται, καὶ χαράσσειται πένθος.*
 Considerable diversity of opinion prevails as to the correct
 interpretation of this passage. When it is remembered,
 however, that *κίκοιται*, med., means to beat the breast in
 grief, like Lat. *plangere*, it seems evident that *χαράσσειται*,
 taken in connection with *στρέει* and *κίκοιται*, can refer only
 to the *καρδιαὶ ἀνθρώπων*. I therefore conclude that by a bold
 image the poet ascribes to the very soil the horrors of frenzied
 mourning, with the modes of which the Greeks were familiar.

The Persians.

23

Chorus.

To look upon thee awes me;
 To speak before thee awes me:
 By ancient fear subdued.

690

DARIUS.

But since from Hades I have come, by thy complaints
 persuaded,
 Give to mine ear no long discourse, but tell thy tale
 concisely;
 Laying aside thine awe of me, reveal the whole full
 quickly.

Chorus.

I tremble to obey thee,
 Tremble to speak before thee
 Things harsh for friends to hear.

DARIUS.

Well, since thine ancient reverence thy spirit thus
 impedeth,
 Hoar partner of my royal couch, do thou, much
 honoured lady, 700
 These cries and lamentations leave, and somewhat tell
 distinctly.
 That upon mortal men should come afflictions, is but
 human.
 Many calamities by sea, many by land still happen
 To mortals, if to wider scope their life should be
 extended.

ATOSSA.

O thou in happy fortune blest beyond the lot of mortals,
 In envied glory, while thine eyes still gazed upon the sunlight,
 Leading a life of happiness, a god unto the Persians.
 Happy, in sooth, I deem thee now, dying before thou sawest
 Our depth of ill. Thou in brief space the tale shall hear, Darius.
 In utter ruin, so to speak, prostrate lies Persia's fortune.

710

DARIUS.

How, prithee? Came contagion's blast or discord o'er the city?

ATOSSA.

By neither, but near Athens' walls hath our whole host been routed.

DARIUS.

What son of mine an armament hath thither led? Inform me.

ATOSSA.

Impetuous Xerxes, all the life of wide-spread Asia draining.

DARIUS.

By land or sea, unhappy man, made he this mad endeavour?

ATOSSA.

By both in sooth; a twofold front there was of twofold army.

DARIUS.

But how could armament so vast on foot pass from the mainland?

ATOSSA.

O'er Hellè's strait he artful throw a bridge, and so found passage.

DARIUS.

Thus hath he wrought, and so hemm'd in the Bosphorus' strong current!

ATOSSA.

So was it, yet some demon-power did haply aid his purpose.

720

DARIUS.

Alas, some mighty demon came, and hath befool'd his judgment.

ATOSSA.

True, for the issue clearly shows what evil he accomplished.

DARIUS.

And what hath been the fate of those o'er whom ye groan, lamenting?

ATOSSA.

The naval army, worsted, drew the land force to destruction.

DARIUS.

So utterly by hostile spear hath the whole army perished?

ATOSSA.

Ay, emptied of her warriors, means all the town of Susa.

DARIUS.

Woe for our loves vainly made, and many-nationed
army!

ATOSSA.

Not Bactria's martial flower alone, but her old men
have perished.

DARIUS.

O hapless son, of our allies the youth how hath he
ruined?

ATOSSA.

Alone, abandoned, so they say, Xerxes, with but few
others— 730

DARIUS.

How hath he met his end, and where? or is there hope
of safety?

ATOSSA.

Was fain to reach the bridge that links two continents
together.

DARIUS.

And hath he to this mainland come in safety? Is this
certain?

ATOSSA.

Ay, so prevailth the report; in that is no dissension.

DARIUS.

Alas! full speedily hath come the oracles' fulfilment,
Upon my son hath Zeus hurled down the end of the
predictions;
I hoped it would be long indeed, ere Heaven these ills
accomplished;

But when in haste man presses on, the god still keeps
beside him.

A fount of ills for all my friends seems now to be
discovered;

All this my son through ignorance hath wrought and
youthful daring, 740

Who Hell's sacred tide, forsooth, as it had been his
vassal,

And Bosporos, the stream of gold, did hope to curb
with fetters;

The current fashioned he anew, and hammer-beaten
shackles

Casting around, for mighty host achieved a mighty
causeway.

Though mortal, all the gods he thought, infatuate, to
master,

Ay, e'en Poseidon; was not this sheer froney of spirit
That held my son? In fear I am lest all the ample
treasure

My toil amassed, become to men the spoil of the first
conquer.

ATOSSA.

Converse with evil-minded men hath taught impetuous
Xerxes

Such lessons; for thy spear, they say, won for thy sons
vast riches, 750

While he, through cowardice of soul, his spear at home
still wieldeth,

Thus adding nothing to the wealth bequeathed him by
his father.

Hearing from evil-minded men full often these reproaches,
This expedition did he plan and armament to Hellas.

DARIUS.

Therefore by him lath ruin been achieved
Portentous, aye to be remembered, such
As ne'er before on Susa's city fell
To drain it utterly, since Sovereign Zeus
Ordained this honour, that one potentate
O'er all sheep-pasturing Asia sway should bear,
The sceptro wielding of command; for first 760
A Median led the host; another then,
His son, succeeding, the emprise achieved,
For reason swayed the rudder of his mind.
Third after him, Cyrus, god-favoured man,
Boigned, and for all his friends established peace;
O'er Lydia's host and Phrygia spread his rule,
And all Ionia forcibly subdued,
For, sage of heart, to him no god was foe.
A son of Cyrus fourth the army ruled;
Fifth, Mardos governed, to his fatherland 770
An outrage, and to Persia's ancient throne;
And him, by stratagem, brave Artaphren,
In league with friendly chiefs whose work this was,
Slew in his palace.* Next myself obtained

* εκτος δε Μαραφίς, εβδoμος δ' Αρταφρηνες.

"The sixth was Maraphis, and the seventh Artaphrenes."
As this line is almost universally regarded as spurious, I have
thought it better to omit it from the context. It has been

The lot I craved, and with a mighty host
Full many a warlike expedition led;
But ne'er on Susa brought I bale like this.
But Xerxes, young in years, is young of soul,
And my paternal charge remembers not.
For, be assured, ye my compeers in age, 780
Not all of us, of yore these powers who held,
Shall e'er be proven to have wrought such ills.

Chorus.

What then, O King Darius? What the goal
To which thine utterance tends? How in this strait
May we, thy Persians, fare hereafter best?

DARIUS.

March ye no more against the Hellenes' land,
Not though the Median host outnumber theirs;
The soil itself to them is an ally.

Chorus.

How meanest thou? In what way their ally?

DARIUS.

By famine slaying bloated armaments. 790

Chorus.

What if choice force we levy, well-equipped?

reasonably conjectured that a diligent reader had written
out in verse the names of the seven conspirators, here called
friendly chiefs, Maraphis and Artaphrenes being the two
last names.

DARIUS.

Nay, but the host which yet on Hellas' soil
Abideth, safe return shall not achieve.

Chorus.

What sayest? Doth not the Barbaric host
Entire recross from Europe Hollè's strait?

DARIUS.

Of many few, if it behoveth one,
Beholding things accomplished, to have faith
In god-sent oracles; for ne'er of these
Do some fulfilment find while others fail.
If this be so, persuaded by vain hopes,
A large and chosen force he leaves behind. 800
These linger where Asopos floods the plain,
Kind source of fatness to Boeotia's fields.
There them awaits to bear of ills the crown,
Just meed of insolence and godless thoughts.
For reaching Hellas, awe forbade them not
Statues of gods to spoil or shrines to fire.
Altars are swept away, and hallowed fanes,
Uprooted from their basement, ruined lie.
Hence, having evil wrought, evil themselves
Not less they suffer, and shall suffer more. 810
Not yet is reached the bottom of their woe,
But still it welletb up, a quenchless flood; *
Such gouts of bloody slaughter shall there lie

* *ἐκκατέρωθεν*. The Greek word being wholly uncertain,
have adopted the emendation of Schütz, who is followed
by Blomfield and Dindorf. My version slightly amplifies
the original.

Upon Plataea's soil from Dorian spear—
Yea, and to children's children, heaps of slain
Voiceless, shall record bear to eyes of men,
That thoughts too lofty suit not mortal man.
For bursting into blossom, Insolence
Its harvest-car, Delusion, ripeneth,
And reaps most tearful crop. Beholding then,
Such the requital of these impious deeds,
Remember Athens, Hellas,—and let none 820
Disdaining present fortune, lusting still
For other, squander great prosperity.
For Zeus, chastiser of overweening thoughts,
Is eye at hand, an auditor * severe.
Wherefore, with timely warning, teach ye him
Lacking in wisdom, that he henceforth cease
'Gainst Heaven to sin, with overweening pride.
But thou, O Xerxes' aged mother dear,
Enter thy home, and taking fit attire
Go meet thy son; for the embroidered robes, 830
Through grief of heart at these calamities,
Around his person all are torn to shreds.
Soothe him with kindly words, for well I wot,
Thy voice alone will he endure to hear.
But I to nether darkness now depart.
Farewell, ye elders; although ills surround,
Yet to your souls give joyance, day by day,
For to the dead no profit is in wealth.

[*Ghost of DARIUS descends.*]

* Political metaphor, from the revision of the accounts by
a public officer.

Chorus.

Hearing of Persia's sorrows manifold,
Present and yet to come, sorely I grieved. 840

ATOSSA.

O Fate unblest! How many grievous ills
Upon me fall, yet most this sorrow stings,
That of my son's dishonour I must hear,
His royal limbs in tatter'd garb arrayed.
But I will go, and taking from my home
Costly attire, meet, if I may, my son.
For ne'er will we our dearest fail in woe.

[*Exit ATOSSA.*]*Chorus. STROPHE I.*

Noble and blest in sooth our city-ruling life,
What time our monarch hoar, 850
Resourceful, blameless, unsubdued in strife,
Godlike Darius ruled our country o'er.

ANTISTROPHE I.

As chiefs of glorious hosts were we displayed,
†Firm laws did all things guide,
While scathless and unworn, when war was laid,
‡In triumph to their homes our warriors hied.

STROPHE II.

How many a town he took, yet seldom he 860
The Halys crossed, or from his hearth would roam; *

* The Halys (which has been identified with the modern Kizil Irmak) was the ancient boundary of the Lydian and Persian monarchies. It was moreover a very dangerous

The cities such of the Strymonian Sea,
The Achelôdês, near the Thracians' home.

ANTISTROPHE II.

And those tower-girded, distant from the coast,
Towns of the mainland, recognised his sway.
Those near Propontis' gulfs their site which
boast, 870
Round Hellê's ample frith and Pontos' bay.

STROPHE III.

And islands of the main,
Fronting the headland that o'erlooks the sea,
Hard by this Asian plain;
Lecbos, and Samos crowned with olive-trees,
Mycônos, Paros, Naxos, Chios, these,
And Andros, joining Tenos neighbourly.

ANTISTROPHE III.

Ay, and each isle that lies
Midway between the mainlands he controlled;
Icânos' seat of old;

river to overpass, being situated at the bottom of a deep rocky chasm, at least in a considerable part of its course. The celebrated oracle, "If Croesus passes over the Halys, he shall destroy a great kingdom," adds significance to the poet's words.

By the hearth of the Great King we may understand Persepolis, or some other royal city of Persia, and may interpret the poet to mean that Darius, like a wise ruler, subdued many distant countries by the arms of his generals, without taking the field himself.

Rhode, Lemnos, Cnidos; Cyprian towns of
fame, 880
Paphos and Soli, Salamis, dread name,
Whose mother-city wakes these doleful cries.

ERODE.

And to his will Ionia's towns he bent,
Well peopled by Hellenæ, opulent;
And strength exhaustless his of mailed array,
Of allies too, a motley band;
But now, not dubiously, by God's own hand,
Smitten with mighty blow
Through naval overthrow, 890
Behold we former glories swept away.

[Enter XERXES, with Attendants.]

XERXES.*

Ah, wretched me, whom Fate
With most unlook'd-for blow
Hath smitten! With what hate
A God on Persia's race
Hath trampled! What dire woo
Is mine! Unhappy wight!

* The account given by Herodotus of the lamentations of the Persian host on occasion of the death of Masistius, general of the Persian cavalry at the battle of Plataea, may be quoted as illustrating the prolonged wail which concludes the drama of the Persians. "The grief was violent and unbounded, manifested by wailings so loud as to echo over all Ætolia; while the hair of men, horses, and cattle was abundantly cut in token of mourning."—GROTE'S *History of Greece*.

Loosed is my strength of thow,
Those elders meeting face to face.
Would that, O Zeus, me too,
With the brave men laid low, 900
Death's doom had veiled in night.

Chorus.

Woe, king, for our brave army! Woe
For honours vast of Persia's reign,
Her warriors of renown,
Whom Fate hath now mown down!
Earth mourns her martial bloom,
Growth of her soil, by Nexes slain,
Who crowds with Persians Hades' gloom.
† Full many chiefs, our country's flower,
Lords of the conquering bow,
Now tread the paths of doom, 910
For multitudinous the power
Of men by death laid low.
Woe for our trusty forces! woe!
For Asia's land, upon her knee,
In direful fall, O king! sinks direfully.

XERXES. STROPHE I.

Ah, miserable me,
Worthy of pity, born to be
To race and fatherland a direful ill.

1st Chorus.

And I, thy home-return to hail,
An evil-omened dirge will trill,

The Persians.

A voice well versed in pain ;
like Mariandyno mourner's strain, 920
A doleful, tear-fraught wail.

ΧΕΙΡΕΣ. ANTISTROPHE I.

Pour notes of grief profound,
Plaintive of doleful sound ;
'rom me hath vengeful Fortune turned away.

2nd Chorus.

With groans I too will pay
no honour to our city's bale—
Our sea-inflicted woes ;
Yea, like the anguished throes
Id-rest sire, shall sound my tear-fraught wail.

ΧΕΙΡΕΣ. STROPHE II.

From the Ionians' might
no mischief did our ship-fenced Mars sustain,
In shock of changeful fight ; 930
no mournful-fated coast shearing * and land-
bound main.†

Chorus.

woe! search out the worst ; woe, woe!

σήμερον. Blomfield says, with reference to this word, others render it, 'having devastated.' But I have met *σήμερον* in the middle voice, except to mean, 'locks in sign of grief.' Mann admits the conjecture of Pauw and Heath, *ἡδιστα.*—*Pulcr.*

*The Persians.**Chorus.*

Him, thine all-trusty eye,
 Thy warriors who told o'er
 By ten times fifty score,
 Alphistos, Batanochos' heir,
 Sesames' son, who owed his birth
 To Megabates, him didst leave,
 Parthos and great Ebares there
 Didst leave to die?
 Dire ills for Persia's sons of highest worth
 We from thy lips receive.

960

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE III.

Ah me! Alas! Woe! Woe!
 A thrill of tender pain
 For my brave comrades' sake,
 Telling of ills most hateful, thou dost wako.
 Cries out my very heart, yea, cries amain.

970

Chorus.

We for another mourn,
 Of Mardian host the head,
 Xanthos;—Anchares, Arian-born,
 Diexis and Arsaces, who
 Afield our mounted forces led,
 Kiglagatas and Lythimnas,
 War-craving Tolmos—these, alas,
 These mourn we too.
 Sorrow astounds, ah me,
 Sorrow astounds my mind

980

The Persians.

253

These chiefs on tented cars no more to see
 Thy royal pomp behind.

XERXES. STROPHE IV.

For lost are they our host who led.

Chorus.

Lost amid the nameless dead

XERXES.

Woe! Woe! Alas! Woe! Woe!

Chorus.

Alas, in sooth, for lo!
 Ill so unlooked-for and pre-eminent
 As Atè no'er beheld, the gods have sent.

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Stricken are we by heaven-sent blow.

990

Chorus.

Stricken, in sooth, too plain our woe.

XERXES.

Fresh griefs, fresh griefs, ah me!

Chorus.

Meeting Ionian seamen, we
 Have now, alas, encountered dire disgrace;
 Unfortunate in war is Persia's race.

XERXES. STROPHE V.

Stricken, too true, with host so great.

Chorus.

Perished hath Persia's high estate.

XERXES.

Dost see this remnant of my warlike gear?

Chorus.

Yea, I behold. 1000

XERXES.

This also—arrows that should hold?

Chorus.

What sayest sayol hath been?

XERXES.

Caskot for missiles keen.

Chorus.

Small rest of ample store.

XERXES.

None left to aid us more.

Chorus.

Ionia's people flee not from the spear.

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE V.

Too warlike they! I've seen unlooked-for woe.

Chorus.

Wilt tell of flight and naval overthrow?

XERXES.

At this sad chance my robes I rent.

Chorus.

Ah me! Ah me!

1010

*XERXES.*Worse than *ah me!* ay, worse!*Chorus.*

Double, ay, threefold curse.

XERXES.

Joyful to foes, to us despair.

Chorus.

Maimed prowess we lament.

XERXES.

Naked of escort I, and bare.

Chorus.

Through the disasters of thy friends at sea.

XERXES. STROPHE VI.

Weep, weep our loss, and to the palace go.

Chorus.

Alas! Alas! Woe! Woe!

XERXES.

Responsive cries intone.

Chorus.

An ill bequest of ill to ill.

1020

XERXES.

Wail forth thy cadence shrill.

Chorus.
Woe! Woe! Alas! Woe! Woe!

XERXES.
Heavy, in sooth, the blow.

Chorus.
Which sorely I bemoan.

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE VI.
Ply, ply the stroke, lift for my sake your cries.

Chorus.
Woe-fraught, I weep amain.

XERXES.
Wail with responsive groan.

Chorus.
This care, my liege, I own.

XERXES.
Swell loud the doleful strain.

Chorus.
Woe! Woe! Alas! Woe! Woe!

XERXES.
Mingled with many a blow!

1030

The Persians.

257

XERXES. STROPHE VII.
Ay, beat thy breast, and raise the Mysian wail.

Chorus.
Pain, grievous pain!

XERXES.
And from thy chin pluck out the silver hair.

Chorus.
Woe-fraught, we pluck amain!

XERXES.
Send with shrill cries the air.

Chorus.
Cries shall not fail.

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE VII.
With forceful hand tear thou thy bosom's stole. 1040

Chorus.
Pain, grievous pain!

XERXES.
Our host lamenting rend thy tresses too.*

Chorus.
Woe-fraught, we weep

XERXES.

For those who perished in our triremes, woe!

Chorus.

Thou I'll escort with piteous notes of pain.

[*Exeunt in solemn procession.*]

NOTES.

THE PERSIANS.

99. In Blomfield and Scholefield I read φιλόφρων γὰρ σαίνουσα τὸ πρῶτον, παύγει | βροτὸν εἰς ἀρκύστατα. It seems undeniable that ἀρκύστατα is rightly corrected to ἄρκυας Ἄτα, σαίνουσα agreeing with Ἄτα: also Hermann well changes σαίνουσα to ποτισαίνουσα, as metre seems to require. But Dindorf, in 3rd ed., strangely cuts it down into φιλόφρων γὰρ παρ᾽ αἰνέει | βροτὸν εἰς ἄρκυας Ἄτα: and the Oxford ed. of 1851 (perhaps by misprint) wholly omits εἰς ἄρκυας Ἄτα.

653. Δαρεῖον οἶον ἄνικτα Δαρειῶν. Schütz corrected οἶον into θεῖον. Τοις δαίμονι θεῖον, ἄνικτα Περσῶν is plausible. So in v. 663, 668, βίσκε, πατήρ ἄκικος ὁ Περσῶν.

658. For εὐ ἐποδάκει, I suggest εὐ πεδάκει. In Theocritus, μετακῶ is transitive, εἰσε to migrate. If you so interpret πεδάκει, it means that Darius successfully superintended the systematic movements of his army.

661. καὶνὰ τε—νῆα τε cannot be right. Perhaps δολαῖα—νῆα τε.

671. The corrupt *δυστα* seems to me to conceal the lost verb. The syntax of the sentence may have been something like this: *τίς δ' ἐνέτεινεν' ἑταίρῳ παίδι τῷ σὺ | δίδυμα δι' ἄστυα δμάρτια*; Who has inflicted on thy son a double punishment of sin?

857. If ἡδὲ is right, I think that *πύργῳ* ought to be *Περσικῇ*.

861. The word lost may be *ἀνέρας*. Thus, *ἀνέρας εὖ πρᾶσσοντες ἴσθ' οἰκίδ'* (?).

904 (921). *Ἀγδαζάραι*. The Chorus is lamenting a special myriad (as it seems) of that locality, namely, of *Persepolis* which city the Greeks called simply *Πέρσαι*. I think, then, that Blomfield rightly joins *Περσῶν Ἀγδαζάραι γάρ*. If *Ἀγδαζάραι* be sound, it is a Persian name or epithet. Heath, who wishes to correct it to *ἱπποζάραι*, has perhaps divined the sense, which in Persic would be *Ἀσπαζάραι*; and if we must change, this is to me most plausible. The horse-men were archers, *τοξοδύμῳρες*. I cannot think *Αἰδοζάραι* an improvement. Dindorf seems rightly to adopt the ingenious correction, *πάνυ τάρφους τις*, for *πάνυ γὰρ † φούστis*.

F. W. N.

THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES.

INTRODUCTION.

THE trilogy to which this drama belonged was represented B.C. 467, five years after* "The Persians," and consisted, as we learn from the Didascalia given in the Medicean manuscript, of *Laïos*, *Œdipus*, and "The Seven against Thebes," followed by the Satyric drama of the Sphinx. It has been appropriately styled the dramatic epos of the House of Labdacos, for though the conflicting emotions in the soul of *Œtœcles* are portrayed with true tragic insight, yet in "The Seven," as in "The Persians," narrative so far preponderates over action as to render the treatment of their respective subjects epic rather than dramatic.

In this, as in the other dramas of *Æschylus*, the aim of the poet is to vindicate the divine government, and to exhibit the ultimate triumph of order and justice. ✓ The principle more especially emphasized, that of divine retribution—"the key-stone of the universal order"—was embodied by the Greeks in the word *Nemesis*: passing from the domain of conscience, it became in later times a divinity, and has been aptly characterized by Bunsen as the "Muse of Justice." In accordance with her teaching, the eternal laws can

* Paley.

never be violated with impunity: with sleepless vigilance the dread avenger follows on the track of crime: for a season, perhaps, no muttering is heard of the coming storm; but not the less inevitably does punishment eventually overtake the wrongdoer, or his posterity. Associated with this inexorable law of retribution, the poet, in the Theban tragedy, exhibits the working of those mysterious tendencies to moral evil which, like hereditary disease, not unfrequently accompany the fatal heritage of crime, and which are not counteracted by the force of personal will, in the final destruction of the sin-polluted race. In the outline of the hoary legend, the main features of which would doubtless be embodied in the first two members of the trilogy, the Laios and the Oedipus, is essential for the due appreciation of the concluding drama.*

The crime of Laios may be regarded as the seed-corn from which he and his descendants reaped a tear-fraught harvest. This is indicated in the oracle of "The Seven against Thebes" (v. 737), which has been truly said strikes the key-note of the tragedy. Received as a guest into the house of Pelops—according to the legend, carried off Chrysippus, son of his host, whose curse against the ravis subsequently confirmed by Apollo, who thrice drove him from his sacred shrine to save the State by childless. Heedless of the divine monition, he,

* An interesting exposition of the solar character of the Theban legend will be found in Cox's "Mythology of Aryan Nations," chap. x.

evil hour, "begat his proper woo, in Oedipus the parricide" (v. 747).

Laios, in order to evade the oracle which had declared that himself would be slain by any son whom he might beget, caused the infant, as soon as born, to be exposed on Mount Cithæron, the savage scenery of which harmonizes with the dark passages of Hellenic lore with which it is associated. Here he is found by the herdsmen of Polybos, king of Corinth, who carry him to their master, by whom he is reared as his own child. When grown to manhood, doubts having been cast upon his descent, he repairs to Delphi, in order to discover the truth as to his parentage. Warned by the oracle not to return to his country, he proceeds towards Boeotia, and at the spot called the divided way, encounters Laios, whom in a skirmish he slays, not knowing him to be his father. Pursuing his journey he arrives at Thebes, where, after solving the riddle of the Sphinx, he obtains the kingdom, and marries Jocasta, by whom he becomes the father of two sons, Eteocles and Polyneikes, and of two daughters, Antigone and Ismene. The truth respecting his unhappy marriage being at length brought to light, he in despair puts out his eyes, and resigns the government to his sons. They, wishing that the family shame should be concealed from the eyes of men, place him in confinement, and it is related in one fragment of the Thebais, that instead of the shoulder of the victims sacrificed on the altar, they sent him the less honourable portions. This, in his rage, he cast upon the

ground, and, at the same time, prayed to the gods that his sons might perish, each by the hand of the other. Reference appears to be made to this ancient form of the tradition in the *Seven* (v. 787). The brothers, fearing lest their father's curse should be fulfilled, make an agreement to reign over the Theban territory in turn, each for the space of a year. Eteocles, as the elder, reigns first, and at the appointed time Polynices comes to demand the sceptre, which his brother refuses to resign. Polynices retires to Argos, and persuades Adrastus, his father-in-law, to assist him to recover the throne. Accordingly, that prince and five other chiefs, accompanied by Polynices, march against the Cadmeian city. With their appearance before the walls the third member of the trilogy opens.

Such, in outline, is the terrible story which ushers in "*The Seven against Thebes*." The first tragedy probably ended with the death of Laios, while the wrath of Oedipus, and his curse, twice pronounced against his sons, would doubtless form a principal feature of the second drama. This we may infer from the prominence given to the curse in the concluding member of the trilogy.

I cannot but think, however, that we should misread the poet did we imagine that the death of the brothers resulted from the inevitable operation of their father's curse. Eteocles, though courageous, is full of insatiable rage, and instead of yielding to the pathetic pleading of the Chorus, exults in the prospect of fratricide; while Polynices is represented as sharing

the malignant hatred of his brother (v. 632). Eteocles, moreover, by retaining the sovereignty, violates the claims of justice; and Polynices, by seeking to regain it with the assistance of an invading host, is guilty of impiety towards his country: thus the death of the brothers, through mutual slaughter, is the penalty due to their respective wrongdoing, and, as such, offers no violence to our sense of justice. King Apollo, it is true, the awful Seventh, is represented as taking his station at the seventh gate, and avenging upon the sons of Oedipus the ancient transgression of Laios; at the same time the poet makes us feel that they have themselves succumbed to the evil tendencies inherent in the race, and thus it is that their father's curse has exercised its dread ascendancy over their destiny.

Had the trilogy terminated with the death of the brothers such a catastrophe would have violated an essential canon of classical dramatic art, which requires the final reconciliation of the principles brought into collision during the action of the play. These principles, in the drama before us, are—duty to the family, and duty to the State; the harmonious action of which is necessary to the well-being of society. Thus it would appear that the decree of the senate respecting the burial of the royal brothers, which has been regarded as a dramatic blunder on the part of Æschylus, is in fact essential for bringing about a satisfactory *dénouement*. When, in spite of the prohibition of the senate, Antigone proclaims her heroic determination to inter her brother, she claims our warmest

sympathy and admiration: had she stood alone, her heroism and sisterly affection would have offered a refreshing relief to the deadly hatred of the brothers. The action of the Chorus gives, however, a deeper significance to the episode. The Chorus, it must be remembered, represents in the Greek theatre the moral conscience of the age, in its most elevated form;* a character strikingly exemplified in the drama before us. At the commencement, indeed, they are timid Theban women, who, vividly realizing the brutal outrages offered to women after the capture of a beleaguered city, are possessed by overwhelming fear. As the drama develops, however, they gradually assume a loftier tone; the words of exhortation addressed by them to Eteocles are full of piety and wisdom: when, therefore, one half of the Chorus follow, with Antigone, the body of Polyneikes, and the other half, with Ismene, that of Eteocles, we may understand that the poet intended thus to recognise the equal sacredness of the principles respectively represented by the sisters, namely, allegiance to the holy tie of kindred-blood, and fealty to the State—the object, in Greek civilization, of the most ardent patriotism.

The great Theban trilogy, as remarked by Bunsen, begins and ends with deeds of horror; but as the last and heaviest judgment is executed, gracious images of the future surround the bodies of the slain; the devoted heroism displayed by the Theban women “is a living pledge for the moral order of the world,” and offers a

* Hegel.

spectacle commensurate in grandeur with the darker features of the drama.

Very interesting is the protest thus offered by the prophet-bard of antiquity to that want of respect for women, and that jealousy of their participation in the functions of men, which find such frequent expression in Greek literature, and which are embodied in the insolent language addressed by Eteocles to the Chorus at the commencement of the drama (v. 169).

Such examples as that of the Theban women may have inspired the wise utterance of Plato, who declares that for the legislator to leave women without education, and without sufficient scope for their energies, is materially to cripple the power of the State.*

With regard to the political bearing of the drama, K. O. Müller remarks that Æschylus strove to moderate the restless struggles of his countrymen after democracy and dominion over other Greeks. The description of the upright Amphiaræus, who wished not to *seem*, but to *be* the best; the wise general from whose mind, as from the deep furrows of a well-ploughed field, noble counsels proceed, was universally applied by the Athenian people to Aristides, and was doubtless intended by Æschylus for him. In conclusion, I may allude to the passage in the *Iliad* which relates how, when the invading army reached Asôpos' banks, Tydeus was sent forward to Thebes to speak the common message of the host. Admitted into the palace of Eteocles, undaunted though alone, he

* Laws, vii. 805.

challenged the Cadmoians to combat, and, through Athena's aid, came off victorious. Whereupon the Cadmoians sought to compass his returning steps, and planted an ambush of fifty warriors; these Tydous slew, one only being left to bear the tidings homeward.

This treachery on the part of the Cadmoians furnishes a motive for the impetuous eagerness manifested by Tydous to advance to the attack: it may also throw light upon the iron-hearted purpose of the infuriated chiefs, which found expression in their terrible oath—

“Cadmoe' town
To pillage, and its fort to raze, or else,
Dying themselves, to steep this earth in blood.”

And so far, to the present day, in sooth
 God in our favour hath inclined the scale;
 For unto us, so long beleaguered here,
 War prospers in the main, through heaven's high will;—
 But now, so speaks the seer, angur divine,
 Without fire omens, but in ear and mind
 Marking, with faultless skill, presageful birds,—
 He, lord of these divining arts, declares
 That the prime onset of the Achaian host,
 Night-plotted, threatens even now the town;
 Haste, to the turrets then and bastion-gates
 Rush in full panoply;—the breastworks throng,
 Take station on the platforms of the towers,
 And, biding at the outlets of the ports,
 Be of good courage, nor this alien swarm
 Dread over-much; God will rule all for good.
 Myself have scouts sent forth and army spies,
 Who, as I trust, no bootless journey make;
 And having heard their tidings, in no wise
 Shall I by guileful stratagem be caught.

[*Exeunt Citizens*]

[*Enter MESSENGER.*]

MESSENGER.

Noble Eteocles, Cadmeians' lord,
 I come clear tidings bringing of the host;—
 Myself eye-witness am of what befel;
 For seven impetuous warriors, captains bold,
 Slaving the sacred bull o'er black-rimmed shield,
 And touching with their hands the victim's gore,

Ares, Enyo, and blood-thirsting Fear
 Invoked, and sworn before them,—Cadmos' town
 To pillage, and its fort to raze, or else,
 Dying themselves, to steep this earth in blood.
 But for their parents whom at home they left,
 With their own hands around Adrastus' ear
 Memorials they were hanging, shedding tears,
 But from their lips no word of ruth was heard;
 For iron-hearted purpose, all aglow
 With manly courage, breathed as lions breathe.
 Whose eyeballs glare with battle. Such my news,
 Which by no sluggishness have been delayed.
 I left them casting lots that each might lead,
 As Fate assigned, his squadron to the gates;
 Hence at their outlets marshal with all speed
 Our bravest men, our city's chosen sons;
 For near already, raising dust, comes on,
 Full-armed, the Argive host, while glistening foam
 Mottles the plain with flakes from panting steeds.
 But thou, like prudent helmsman of the ship,
 Make staunch the city, before Ares' blasts
 Swoop down upon it; loud the land-wave roars;
 Thou, for this charge, the swiftest moment seize:
 Myself, sure watch, a wary eye will keep,
 And thou, through certain tidings, knowing all
 Outside that happens, without scath shalt be.

[*Exit.*]

ETEOCLES.

O Zeus, and Earth, and Gods our town who guard.
 And thou strong curse, Erinyes of my sire,

70

T

My city, where the speech of Hellas flows,
 With utter ruin, captured by the foe,
 Uproot ye not, nor our domestic hearths,
 But grant that our free land and Cadmos' town
 In vassal bondage never may be hold.
 Be ye our strength;—our common weal, I urge,
 For thriving cities honour best the gods.

[*Exit.*][*Enter Chorus of Theban Maidens.*]*Chorus.*

I wail forth mighty, fear-inspiring woes!
 An army hurries, from its camp set free!
 A mounted host onward in ample tide

Towards our city flows.

80

Dust that on air doth ride,
 Dumb herald, clear and true, persuadeth me.
 Clatter of horse-hoofs on my natal plain
 Brings to mine ear war's dismal sound;

Air-borne it floats around;

Like mountain-lashing flood's resistless flow

It roars amain.

Alas! ah me!

Ye gods and goddesses, oh turn aside

The impending woe.

Leader of the 1st Half Chorus.

With battle-shout, straight to our city-wall
 The host white-shielded speeds in fair array.

90

1st Maiden.

Who will deliver?

2nd Maiden.

Succour us who
 Or god or goddess?

3rd Maiden.

Prostrate shall I
 Their shrines before?

4th Maiden.

Ye Blest ones h
 Now is the time to clasp your statue

5th Maiden.

Burdened with sorrow, why, oh why

6th Maiden.

The clash of shields meets it, or not

7th Maiden.

†When, if not now, shall we our prayer
 With sacred peplos and wool-tufted

8th Maiden.

I mark the rattling din!
 It is the clatter of no single spear.

9th Maiden.

O Ares, tutelary god of old,
 Thy proper soil betraying what wilt give

10th Maiden.

O golden-helm'd god, the State behold
 Which once to count beloved thou did

Leader of 1st Half Chorus.

†Ye tutelary gods, the land who hold,
Come ye, come all, look on this virgin train
Who, dreading bonds, as suppliants on you call.

Leader of 2nd Half Chorus.

For lo! with slanting plumes
A surge of warriors round our city wall,
On blasts of Ares riding, hoarsely booms. 110

Chorus. STROPHE I.

†Do thou, O Zeus, all-perfect Sire, do thou
Avert, thou canst, our capture by the foe;
For Cadmos' fort Argives encircle now;
Weapons of war my heart appal, for lo,
To chargers' mouths made fast, their metal gear
Rings slaughter, and with pride elate,
Seven chiefs, conspicuous o'er the host,
With panoply of spear,
Each having gained by lot his post,
Stand, prompt for battle, at the seventh gate.
• • • • •

MESODE.

Thou too, Zeus-born, war-loving power, do thou, 120
Pallas, our city from destruction save;
Equestrian Lord, thou ruler of the wave,
Poseidon, with fish-piercing trident now
Grant respite from our fears, grant respite thou.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Ares, alas! Our town, the name which bears

Of Cadmos, guard;—show forth thy care divino;
Kypria, do thou, fore-mother of our line,
These ills avert, for from thy blood we came;
Thou we approach with god-invoking prayers. 130
Thou too, Lykeian * Lord, thy name
Attesting, as our groans ascend,
Smite thou the hostile host;—†
And thou from Leto who dost boast
Thy heavenly birth, thy bow, dread virgin, bend.

STROPHE II.

The din of chariot wheels, alas, ah me,
Around our walls I hear;
O Hera, mighty queen!
From axles overburden'd creak the navcs. 140
O Artemis most dear!
Madden'd by hurtling spears vext ether raves.
What ails the city? What its doom will be?
God guides the issue to what goal unseen?

ANTISTROPHE II.

A stone-shower hits the towers, alas, ah me,
Striking their very crown.

* The word *λύκειος*, as an epithet of Apollo, has been variously interpreted to mean, 1st, the wolf-destroyer, from *λύκος*, a wolf; 2nd, the Lycian god, from *λυκηγενής*, Lycian-born; 3rd, the god of light, from a supposed ancient noun, *λύκη*, light. In the text it is generally understood to bear the first of these significations. Sophocles, in the 'Electra' (6), calls Apollo the wolf-slaying god (*λυκοκτόνος*).

† *λύκειος γενοῦ*—a pun upon the epithet "*λύκειος*"—be a wolf-destroyer to the hostile host.

Apollo, our dear Lord!
 With clang of brass-bound shields our gates resound.
 †Zeus only can accord 150
 With righteous issue that the strife be crowned.
 O Onca,* here enthroned, blest Deity,
 Do thou protect our seven-gated town.

STROPHE III.

O ye all-puissant powers,
 Dread guardians of our towers,
 Of either sex, oh hear us, nor betray
 A city toiling 'neath the spear,

* Our poet cannot have mistaken the names borne by the gates of Thebes in his own day; but two of them, Onca and Borrhæan, differ from the names as given by Pausanias some four centuries later. Pausanias has the four names, Proitid, Electran, Neitan and Homoloid, in common with Æschylus; but besides, he has the Ogygian, the Crenæan, and the Hypistai (supreme), or gates of Supreme Jupiter, who had a temple near them. Æschylus informs us that Athena had a temple near the Onenn gates; probably she was hence locally entitled Onca Athena. Onca was thought to be a Phœnician epithet introduced into Thebes by Cadmos. We can only guess that they were the gates called Ogygian (ancient) in the time of Pausanias. Onca, as a Hebrew word, cannot be confidently interpreted; but it may belong to the same root as Anak, a celebrated family of giants. Æschylus does not name the seventh gate, which may have been the Hypistan. It is quite possible that Borrhæan (or Borrhæian, in some editions) meant simply the north gate, and was a secondary appellation. We have Βορρῆας (*borrêas*), with double ρ, in Thucydides.

I am indebted for the above note to my friend Professor Newman.

Nor death by stoning at the people's hand
 Shall they escape. What passeth out of doors
 Is man's concern; let woman counsel not.
 Bide thou within, and no more mischief cause.
 Dost hear or not? Or speak I to the deaf?

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Dear son of Oedipus, I trembled sore,
 Hearing of rattling cars the roar, the roar,
 When wheel-impelling axles shrieked amain,
 When sounded on mine ear
 The noise of fire-wrought gear—
 Till in the chargers' mouths their guiding rein.

190

ETEOCLES.

What then? doth sailor means of safety find,
 Stern forsaking for the prow, what time
 Vessel labours 'mid the ocean wave?

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

Ring on the gods, as was but meet,
 When at our gates pattered the deadly sleet,
 In hurrying pace I sought their statues old;
 By fear possessed, I there
 Poured to the Blest my prayer,
 That they our city's prowess would uphold.

200

ETEOCLES.

That our towers be stanch 'gainst foemen's spear.

Chorus.

What not the gods this boon?

And progeny of Tothys.* Hence we call, 300
 Gods, on your guardian band;—
 Into the powers outside our towers
 Sending the coward's deadly fear,
 Which fatuous casts the shield away,
 Earn for these burghers glory. Hear,
 Oh hear my shrill-voiced wailings and retain,
 As Saviours of our State, your steadfast reign.

STROPHE II.

For sad it were to Hades drear, 310
 Enslaved, as booty of the spear,
 To hurl a city of the olden time,
 In crumbling ashes laid by Argive foe,
 Through heaven's high will, in shameful overthrow
 That women old and virgins in their prime
 Like horses by their hair be dragged, ah me,
 Their robes around them rent, to slavery.
 Wailoth the city emptied of its store,
 While captives, to destruction led 320
 Lamenting, swell the mingled roar.
 This heavy doom forebodingly I dread.

ANTISTROPHE II.

For maids whose bloom is at the full,
 Ere rites the scarce ripe fruit that cull,

* Tethys. An ancient sea-goddess, one of the daughters of Heaven and Earth, wife of Okeanos. Rivers and streams are said to be their progeny. Amphitrita is understood to be another name of this goddess, and Thetis to be only another form of the name Tethys. See Virgil, in 4th Eclogue, 1. Thetis.

The Seven against Thebes.

Whom Aros spared, true offspring of the soil
Is Melanippos; Aros will decide
The issue by the die;—but certes one
Thus to our earth close kin is justly set
From his own mother foeman's spear to ward.

410

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Grant to my champion victory,
Ye deities, since forth he wends
To battle justly and our State defend.
But ah, by fear possess'd, I dread to see
Their gory fates who perish for their friends.

Messenger.

Him may the gods thus with fair fortune crown!
The Electran gates hath Capaneus by lot,
A giant he, o'ertopping him first nam'd.
His vaunt outsoareth mortal pride; these towers 420
He threatens with horrors, which may Fate avert.
For, God assenting or in God's despite,
He vows our town to ravage; not heaven's wrath,
Down leaping on the plain, shall hold him back.
Lightnings and arrows of the thunderbolt
To noonday solar beams he likeneth.
A naked man his blazon, bearing fire;
Flares in his hands a torch, for service prompt;
In golden characters, he cries aloud,
THE CITY I WILL BURN. Against this man
Send thou—but who such foeman will confront? 430
This boaster who will meet and tremble not?

The Seven against Thebes.

291

ETEOCLES.

Here also gain accuoth upon gain.
When in o'erweening thoughts vain men indulge
Their true bowrayer is their proper tongue.
Now threatens Capaneus, for fight equipped,
Scorning the gods; and, practising his tongue,
With senseless joy, though mortal, he to heaven,
High surging words upsends, defying Zeus;
Full faith have I that Zeus, with justice' aid,
Him with his fire-charged thunderbolt will smite.
No whit resembling noonday's solar beams. 440
Him to confront, despite his raving tongue,
Is hero marshall'd, ay, a soul of fire,
Stout Polyphontes; trusty bulwark he,
By grace of tutelary Artemis,
With other gods' approval. Now, tell on,
Who against other gates the lot hath drawn?

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

Perish who vaunteth mightily
Against our city! His career
May thunder check, ere, with o'erweening spear,
My home invading, me as captive prey 450
He driveth from my girlish haunts away!

Messenger.

Him next who drew his station at the ports
I'll name. For to Eteocles, third chief,
From upturn'd brazen casque leapt the third lot,
His band against Neïstan gates to lend.

The Seven against Thebes.

Since foe will foe confront, while on their shields
They into conflict bring two hostile gods.
For Typhon, breathing fire, the one doth bear,
While Father Zeus upon Hyperbios' shield
Sits, firmly throned, wielding his fiery bolt;
But Zeus defeated no one yet hath seen.
Such on each side the friendship of the gods; 510
We with the victors, with the vanquish'd they.
Thus will it with the mortal champions fare,
If Zeus than Typhon stronger be in fight.
And to our champion, as the legend reads
Set on his shield, may Zeus deliverer be.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

Firm is my trust that he
The hateful form who beareth on his shield
Of earth-born deity,
Adverse to Zeus, to men a shape of dread
And to the long-lived gods, prone in the field,
Before our gate shall fling his own proud head. 520

MESSENGER.

Such be the issue! At the northern gates
The fifth is marshalled, near the tomb which holds
Zeus-born Amphion. By his spear he swears,
Which more than God he honours, or his eyes,
To ravage verily, despite of Zeus,
The fete of Cadmus. So the stripling speaks,
Scion fair-faced of mother mountain-reared;
Over his cheek spreadeth the tender down,

The Seven against Thebes.

Hair thickly sprouting of youth's bud
But he with savage temper, which b
His maiden name, and with an eye
Taketli his post;—yet stands he at
Not without vaunt, for on his shield
His body's rounded bulwark, he dot
The raw-devouring Sphinx, our city
Her form stud-fastened, brilliantly
Beneath her holds she a Cadmoian r
A target so for missiles thickly sho
Hither he comes no peddling fight
Nor the long route he traversed to d
Parthenopaïos, an Arcadian born,
But denizen of Argos; such a man
Doth Argos' kindly nurture now re
By threats against our towers, whic

ETEOCLEA.

From the high gods may they the de
Planned in these godless vaunts; so
In shameful rout should perish utter
'Gainst this Arcadian, him thou toll
The warrior Actor stands; no boast
But with a hand which sees the thing
Brother of him whom I before descri
No fluent, deedless, tongue will he a
Within our gates to aggravate our ill
Nor him allow to pass on, hostile sh
Who bears the image of that hateful
• • • • •

But 'neath our walls, sore-batter'd, she will rail
At him who fain would carry her within.
If heaven so wills, herein I truth shall speak.

Chorus. STROPHES III.

His word my breast doth round,
Standeth my hair on end,
Hearing the haughty boast
Of haughty men profane;
Ye Gods, above who reign,
Here, in our land, smite ye their alien host!

MESSENGER.

Sixth, let me name a man most sage of heart,
Amphiaraus, prophet, first in arms;
He, marshall'd at the Homoloian gates,
Tydeus with keen reproaches oft assails,
As homicide, disturber of the State,
To Argos prime instructor in these harms,
Eriny's herald, Slaughter's minister,
Advisor to Adrastus of these ills;
And on thy brother Polynoikos' might,
He calls, dissecting his ill-omened name;*
Then in conclusion, twice with emphasis
His name repeating, utters forth these words:
"Pleasing to gods in sooth is such a deed,
Lovely for future years to hear and toll,
The city of thy sires and native gods
To spoil, made captive by an alien host.

* *Πολυ-ωνυμς*—much strife.

560

57

Can justice the maternal foun
Thy Fatherland, if captur'd th
How can it o'er again be thin
Myself I shall this land enrich
'Neath hostile earth sepulchre
For no dishonourable doom I
Thus spake the soer, wielding
All brass, but no device was
For just to be, he longs, not ju
Ripe wisdom reaping from his
Whence honest counsels grow
Or speaketh words in season.
Champions, I charge thee, sen
For terrible is he who fears th

ETEOCLUS.

Woe for the omen which the
Companion of the impious; ne
In any cause than evil follows
Its fruit may not be garner'd;
Yields death for harvest; yea,
With headstrong sailors bent
Mounting the bark, sinks v
crow;

Or, just himself, but leagued w
Ruthless to strangers, heedless
Caught in the self-same snare,
Smitton with them by God's in
So too this soer himself, Oicles

* Alluding to the device of Jus



For him, too truly Polynceikes named,—
 What his device will work we soon shall know;
 Whether his braggart words, with madness fraught,
 Gold-blazoned on his shield, shall lead him back.
 Had Justice, virgin child of Zeus, in sooth
 Guided his deeds and thoughts, this might have
 been;

660

But neither when he fled the darksome womb,
 Or in his childhood, or in youth's fair prime,
 Or when the hair thick gathered on his chin,
 Hath Justice communed with, or claimed him hers;
 Nor in this outrage on his Fatherland,
 Deem I she now beside him deigns to stand.
 For Justice would in sooth belie her name
 Did she with this all-daring man consort,
 In those regards confiding will I go,
 Myself will meet him. Who with better right? 670
 Brother to brother, chieftain against chief,
 Foe-man to foe, I'll stand. Quick, bring my spear,
 My grooves, and armour, bulwark against stones.

Chorus.

Dearest of mortals, son of Oedipus,
 Be not in wrath like him of fatal name;
 Let Argive warriors with Cadmoians fight.
 It is enough; their blood may be atoned;
 But death of brothers, slain by mutual hands,—
 Old age to such pollution never comes.

ETEOCLEA.

If any one bear evil, let it be

680

ANTISTROPHE V.

And at his sons he flung,
 By ignominious treatment vex'd at heart,
 Curses with bitter tongue,
 That they with iron-wielding hand should part
 One day their wealth. I tremble lest that vow
 Eriny, swift of foot, accomplish now.

[Enter MESSENGER.]

MESSENGER.

Ye maidens, mother-nurtured, courage take,
 Our city hath escaped the vassal yoke; 790
 The boasts of haughty men are come to nought.
 Our city floats in calm, and from the shock
 Of many billows yet hath sprung no leak.
 Staunch are our towers; the chiefs, our gates who
 fenced,
 In single fight their pledges have redeemed.
 All at six gateways prospers in the main;
 The seventh gate, Apollo, royal Lord,
 Dread leader of the seventh, chose to guard,
 Avenging on the sons of Œdipus
 Laios' ill-counselled trespass wrought of old.

Chorus.

What new event hath to the city chanced? 800

MESSENGER.

Saved is the city, but the brother kings—

Chorus.

What sayest thou? Through fear I am distraught.

Chorus.

O mighty Zeus, and tutelary powers
 To whom to rescue these Cadmoian towers
 Has fallen, whether now 820
 Shall I rejoice, and in triumphant strain,
 Our town's unharmed saviour, Fortune, hail,
 Or those war-chiefs bewail,
 Wretched, ill-fated, childless twain,
 Who rightly, as their names avow—
 Names full of glory and of strife,
 Are through intent unhallowed rest of life.

STROPHE.

Dark curse, with full completion crowned,
 Of Œdipus, inherent in the race!
 Hovers an evil chill my heart around. 830
 Like Bacchanal, when on mine ear
 The tidings fell that the blood-dripping slain
 Through evil Fate had died—their tomb to grace,
 A dirge I wove, sad strain.—
 Ill-omened is this concert of the spear.

ANTISTROPHE.

Their father's baleful curse hath wrought,
 Untired, its battle to the bitter end;
 Now Laios' wilful counsels have their mood.

αἰ δὲ γὰρ. As only one of the brothers, Polyneikes, could
 said to have perished ὁβῶς κατ' ἐπωνυμίαν, Hermann
 nks part of a verse lost with an allusion to the name
 Eteocles.—Paley. I have adopted Mr. Newman's sug-
 tion, κατ' ἐτεοκλείς καὶ πολυνείκεις.

*the funeral procession advances, ANTIGONE and ISMENE
are seen approaching.]*

But for a task of bitter pain,
Their brothers' requiem to intone,
Antigone draws with Ismene near;
From lovely, deep-zoned breasts, I deem
Will they, in no ambiguous strain,
With fitting wail their woes deplore,
And ere their utterance reach our ear,
Us, too, it doth bescem 860
The Fury's harsh-toned hymn to sing,
And hostile psalm chant to Hades' King.
Oh most unhappy in your brothers, ye
Wall who round their garments cast the zone;
I weep, I moan,—
ere is no guile,—these wailings that I pour
me from my very heart, unfeignedly.

Semi-chorus I. STROPHE I.

Woo! Woo!

Grantic ones, your friends who disobeyed,
Morrow unsubdued, unhappy twain, 870
Harmed your father's house who captive made.

Semi-chorus II.

ched in sooth, wretched their doom, laid low
To their own dwelling's bane.

Semi-chorus I. ANTISTROPHE I.

Woo! Woo!

Four household walls in dust who laid,

Who bitter kingship tasted; war's keen blade
To you, at length, hath reconciliation brought.

Semi-chorus II.

Ay, the dread fury of their sire hath wrought 880
This all too-stubborn woe.

Semi-chorus I. STROPHE II.

Both smitten through the breast,
The left, ye brethren, offspring of one womb!

Woo! Woo! ye fiend possess!
Woe for the curse of mutual-slaughtering doom!

Semi-chorus II.

Smitten, as ye relate,
Were they, in home and life, with ruin diro,
Both by dumb Fury, and contentious Fate, 890
Sprung from the curse of Oedipus, their sire.

Semi-chorus I. ANTISTROPHE II.

Moans through the city reign,
The turrets moan, means the man-loving plain;
But with their kin doth bide
Their wealth, dire cause to that ill-fated twain
Of strife, whose issue death to either side.

Semi-chorus II.

With hearts keen whetted they
Their wealth apportioned, equal shares they gain;—
Friends blame the umpire,* nor may their affray 900
Be now applauded in triumphal strain.

* The umpire alluded to is the sword.

The Seven against Thebes.

Semi-chorus I. STROPHE III.

Stool-smitten, hapless pair!
Stool-smitten, lie they there.
That fortune, one perchance may ask,
Awaiteth them?—A share
In their ancestral tomb.

Semi-chorus II.

Grief, with heart-piercing groan,
scots them from their home—sad task;—
xrow unfeignèd and unfeignèd moan,
Distressful, joyless, din! 910
/asteth my heart as from its depths within
rue tears I shed, weeping those princes' doom.

Semi-chorus I. ANTISTROPHE III.

This o'er them one may say,
O'er that unhappy twain;—
hat to their friends much bale they wrought
And to the alien host,
Slaughtered in deadly fray.

Semi-chorus II.

Of womankind on earth,
all, the mother's name who boast, 920
wretched she who gave them birth;—
Wedding her son these forth she brought,
kindred hands and mutual murder slain.

Semi-chorus I. STROPHE IV.

others indeed together rest of life,

ANTIGONE and ISMENE.—The former addresses the
corpsé of POLYNEIKES, the latter that of ETEOCLES.]

ANTIGONE.

Smiting, thou wast smitten.

ISMENE.

Slaying, thou wast slain.

ANTIGONE.

Thou with spear didst slaughter.

ISMENE.

Thou the spear laid low.

ANTIGONE.

In thy toil most wretched.

ISMENE.

Wretched in thy woe.

ANTIGONE.

Pour forth lamentations.

ISMENE.

Lourners, weep amain.

ANTIGONE.

rostrate lics the slayer.

ISMENE.

or him lics the slain.

ANTIGONE. STROPHE.

! with sighing raves my spirit.

960

The Seven against Thebes.

315

ISMENE.

Moans my heart within my breast.

ANTIGONE.

Worthy thou of all lamentings.

ISMENE.

Direst fate hath thee oppressed.

ANTIGONE.

By thy friend wert rest of life.

ISMENE.

Thou thy friend hast slain in strife.

ANTIGONE.

Twofold horrors to relate.

ISMENE.

Twofold to behold.

ANTIGONE.

Brothers these by brothers slain.

ISMENE.

Near them stand wo, sisters twain.

ANTIGONE.

Deadly deeds to tell of.

ISMENE.

Deadly to behold.

970

The Seven against Thebes.

Chorus.

Woe, woe, for wretched Fate,
Donor of baleful dower!
O for the shade august of Oedipus!
How Erinyes strong art thou in power!

ANTIGONE. ANTISTROPHE.

Woes, alas, to sight distressing,

ISMENE.

Showed he me, his exile past.

ANTIGONE.

After slaying he returned not.

ISMENE.

Saved, his breath away he cast.

ANTIGONE.

Perished hath he; all too true.

980

ISMENE.

Ay, and him he also slew.

ANTIGONE.

Wretched kindred!

ISMENE.

Wretched fate!

ANTIGONE.

Carce from kindred strife that flow.

The Seven against Thebes.

ANTIGONE.

On our house hath fallen.

ISMENE.

Ay, and on this land.

ANTIGONE.

On me above all others.

ISMENE.

On me who forward see.

1000

ANTIGONE.

Woe for those wretched brothers!

ISMENE.

Woe, Leader-King, for thee!

ANTIGONE.

Of all men most lamented!

ISMENE.

• • • • •

ANTIGONE.

O ye possessed by Atë!

ISMENE.

Where shall we lay the twain?

ANTIGONE.

In spot most rich in honour.

The Seven against Thebes.

319

ISMENE.

Woe, Sire, thy wedded-bane!

[Enter HERALD.

HERALD.

Me it behoves to publish the resolve,

And statute of Cadmoia's senators.

Eteocles, for love he bore the land,

1010

Shall be with kindly obsequies interred.

For in our city, warding off her foes,

Death he encountered; free from all offence

Against his country's rites, blameless, he died

Where for the young to die is glorious.

Of him, I thus am ordered to proclaim.

But this, his brother Polynikes' corpse,

Unburied to cast forth, of dogs the prey,

As ravager of this Cadmoian land,

Unless against his spear some god had stood;

Thus e'en in death polluted he will lie,

1020

Cursed of ancestral gods in scorn of whom,

With alien host, he sought the town to capture.

By winged fowl entombed, inglorious,

For him this just requital is decreed;—

No rearing of the mound by pious hands,

No shrill-voiced wail shall grace his funeral,

Unhonour'd thus with tender obsequies.

So they who rule Cadmoians have ordained.

ANTIGONE.

But to Cadmoia's rulers I declare,

If none will join in burying this man,

1030

Myself will bury him, and take the risk,

Interring mine own brother :—shame is none
 To cancel fealty and brave the State.
 Dread tho the common womb from which we sprang,—
 Of wretched mother born and hapless sire.
 Wherefore my soul, do thou take willing share
 In woes he willed not; living, aid the dead
 With sisterly affection; his dear flesh
 No hollow-bellied wolves shall piecemeal rend;
 Let none suppose it;—woman though I be,
 Tomb and interment will I scheme for him: 1040
 Ay, bearing earth in fold of flaxen robe,
 Him will I shroud;—let none suppose aught else.
 Courage! Effectual means will fail me not.

HERALD.

~~I~~ warn thee not to disobey the State.

ANTIGONE.

~~Warn~~ thee publish no vain words to me.

HERALD.

~~For~~ a people just escaped from harm.

ANTIGONE.

~~Ab~~ bitter them; uncarthd he shall not lie.

HERALD.

~~How~~ the State loathes wilt honour with a tomb?

ANTIGONE.

~~I~~. for the gods have not dishonoured him.* 1050

* Whatever the true Greek text, this seems to be the sentiment.

The Seven against Thebes.

Mourn'd by a sister's lonely-wailing strain.

Who may to this agree?

Semi-chorus I.

Let the city strike with doom, 1070
Or not, who Polynceikes mourn;
We will go and to the tomb
Him escort,—a train forlorn;
For this woe is common dower,
And the claims of right
In our townsmen's sight
Vary with the hour.

Semi-chorus II.

But this other follow we,
As the city doth approve
And Justice;—for in sooth 'twas he,
After those who reign above,
And might of Zeus,—Cadmeia's realm 1080
Who in chief did save
From the alien wave
Which threatened to o'erwhelm.

*It in solemn procession. ANTIGONE and Semi-chorus
follow the corpse of POLYNEIKES; ISMENE and Semi-
chorus II. that of ETEOCLES.]*

The Seven against Thebes.

323

NOTES.

THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES.

THAT the first choral hymn is in an extremely corrupt state
Dindorf emphatically declares. To me the traces appear of a
complete antistrophic system, with a single mesode—120-123
r' & Διογενὲς . . . Ποσειδᾶν. The first strophe and
antistrophe are 78-90. The closing line of the strophe is
corrupt—ἀλεδεμένος πεδισποκτύπος. In 84, I think
αἶ should be ποτανά. In 88, ἰπέρ τειχέων is inconsistent
with the facts, and Dindorf wishes to change it to ἰπέρ
αἰθρῶν. I desire rather to read εὐθὺ γὰρ for βοᾷ ὑπέρ, i. e.,
shout towards the walls. I here present the first strophe
and antistrophe. The Chorus sees the enemy from a
distance—

θρεῦμαι | φοβερὰ μεγάλ' ἄχῃ. μεθεῖται στρατός,
στρατόπεδον λιπών. ῥεῖ πολὺς ὕδρ [πρὸς ὤμῳ]
λεῶς πρὸδρομος ἱππύτας.
αἰθερία κύνες με πείθει φανείσ',
ἄναυδος, σαφής, ἔνυμος ἄγγελος
ἱπερβύς πεδίου πλακώδους.

τ.) ὥσιν | χρίμπτεται [ἔτι] βοᾷ ποτανά, βρέμει δ'
ἀμαχέτου δίκαν ὕδατος ὀροτύπου.
θεοί, θεαί τ', ὀρμένον
κακὸν ἀλεύσατ'. εὐθὺ γὰρ τειχέων
ὁ λεύκασπις ὄρνυται λαὸς εὐ-
τρεπής, οὐπὶ πόλιν διώκων.

The second strophe and antistrophe begin at 91 and 103;
the third are at 97 and 100; so that the order of these is
[β, γ, γ', β']. At v. 108 begins a system [α, β, γ, γ', β', α].

ε', υ', α']. That δ and δ' are antistrophic has been discerned by others.

All of this system end in a line of like metre, viz.—

112. ἄρηξον δαῖον ἄλωσιν. (Close of α.)

116. κινύρονται φόρον χαλινόι. (Close of δ.)

119. προσίστανται πύλιν λαχόντες. (Close of ε.)

123. ἰχθυόω μιν μαχάρ, Ποσειδών. (Close of mesode.)

127. φύλαξον, κήδεσαι τ' ἐναργῶς. (Close of ε'.)

131. αὐτοῦσαι πελαζόμεσθα. (Close of υ'.)

135. [δυσηχῇ] τῶν εὐτυκίζου. (Close of α'.)

If this outline of antistrophes is too much for accident, it is of great value in bridling conjecture. About ten years ago I printed and circulated a conjectural restoration of this and other corrupt Æschylean choruses; but it would be too long to reproduce here. I shall confine myself to what seems most important.

99. For πόν', εἰ μὴ νῦν ἀμφὶ λιτὰν ἔξιμεν, or ἔξομεν, I would read (in double dochmics), πόν', εἰ μὴδὲ νῦν, ἀμφὶ λιτὰν ἔμεν.

103. For ἐπιδ' ἔπιδε, perhaps ἐπισκίπτει | πύλιν, τὰν ποτ' . . . Next, for θεοὶ πολισσοῦχοι χθονὺς, ἔτ' ἔτε πάντες, read θεοὶ πολισσοῦχοι, | χθονὸς τ' ἔται παντελεῖς.

111. ἀλλ' ὦ Ζεῦ πάτερ παντελεῖς, πάντως. That this is corrupt Dindorf regards as evident. He writes πᾶν τέλος ὅς νίμεις, but πάντως does not at all point to ὅς νίμεις. The true metre, as I view it, is expressed by ἀλλ' ὦ Ζεῦ πανάριστοι (or προτελεστα), πάντως.

123. The old text is στόνων αὐτᾶς. For this the Oxford edition has στόνων καππαύτας, and Dindorf, in 3rd edition, στόνων ἀλλύτας for ἀναλύτας. He also reads δαμίφ for δαίφ.

From 137 onward, Burney discovered to be antistrophic. 150, καὶ Διόθεν cannot be right. I suggest, εἰ Διόθεν [μῶλοι] . . . I also, for Ὅγκᾳ πρὸ πύλων, Ὅγκᾳ προπύργιος; or in continuity,

εἰ Διόθεν [μῶλοι]

πολεμόκραντος ἄγνόν τέλος ἐν μάχῃ!

σὺ τε μάκαιρ' ἄνασσ', Ὅγκᾳ προπύργιος, . . .

214. γυνή, which Scholefield calls *sanissimum*, most persons will judge undoubtedly corrupt. Dindorf's γονῆς is unsatisfactory. Since the poet is quoting a proverb, it may have been τυχῆς σωτήρος.

286. The abrupt τί γένωμαι; cannot be right. I make no doubt that the poet's syntax was continuous; whether στείχουσι στεφανωταί, or, ποτὶ πύργου . . . στείχουσι στεφάνωμα, as in Soph. Antig., or again, στεγάνωμα, the roof.

290. παντὶ τρόπῳ, Διογενεῖς, is convicted by metro. I correct it to παντὶ τρόπῳ δέ, συγγενεῖς | θεοί, . . . and in antistrophe I accept ἔλθετε from Dindorf, thus: καὶ πύλωνις ρυτῆρες [ἔλ | θετ'], εὐεδροὶ τε στάθῃτ'.

304. The tame καὶ τὰν is changed by Dindorf into νόσον, excellently for sense; but nearer to καὶ τὰν would be κακὴν (cousardice).

338. κορκορυγαὶ δ' ἀν' ἄστν, ποτὶ πύλιν δ' | ὀρκίνα πυργῶτες, should be responded to by παντοδαπὸς δέ καρπὸς χαμάδις πεσὼν | ἀλγύνει κυρήσας. First, I make little doubt that ποτὶ πύλιν should be ποτιπύλιναι (approaches) which answers all the conditions of the case. Next, the Crotic ὀρκίνα convicts the Molossus ἀλγύνει as false. The least change which I find is ἀλφάνει, and to this I adhere until driven from it by some impossibility. (One might conjecture ἀλλοεθνεῖ for ἀλγύνει, but ἀλφάνει introduces a minimum of change.) Κυρήσας also is wrong; for πεσὼν κυρήσας, "having happened to fall," is redundant, even in prose; besides, we need in κυρήσας an accusative after ἀλφάνει (affords, yields). Πυργῶτες is wrong both in metro and in sense. Ὀρκίνα must be the net-rope, by which victors swept the streets and squares, and caught runaways. It seems to be alluded to in Iliad, v. 487, where it has the epithet πάνταγρος, which in the tragic poets may be παντῶγρος, or here, perhaps, παντῶγρεῦτις. The last would more easily be corrupted into πυργῶτες than πάνταγρος. Moreover, we thus get better metre—

ἀράντα παντῶν γένεσι, πρὸς ἀν-
δρὰς δ' ἀνὴρ δορὶ καίνεσθαι.

of these lines is *three Cretics*, and the latter a very rhythm. Dindorf, too fond of double dochmies, is before *δορὶ*; but the poet rather speaks of and *στὰς* is somewhat out of place. We return for which we now want a word that shall respond *στὰς*, and give a suitable accusative to *ἀλφάνει*. *στὰς* nearer than *κύρμ'* (*booty of war*), though the Homeric genitive, *Ἄρμος*, in the tragedians. Line (352) editors insert *τῶν*, *metri causa*, before (the storekeepers); but it is useless and feeble. I insert *τοῖς*, *δορὶ*, *θῆν*, *πῶς*, the adverb *ἐκεῖ*, or *ἐν* *ἀρῇ*. In some such way we have the anti-

ἀλφάνει κύρμ' Ἄρμος, πικρὸν δ'
ἔρμα [θῆν] θαλαμηπόλων.

to be nearly as the prosaic *δορὶ* *πῶς*, no doubt. After all, *ἀρῇ* is more plausible.

64 Hermann has rightly discerned, that the *στὰς* does not mean *death*, but violation of the *ἑλπίς* means *apprehension*, *fear*, and that *εὐνὴν* inserted by some one who did not understand the right. For *τλήμονες εὐνὴν* Hermann has *τλήμον* seems to me that we rather need (writing *ἐκ* *ἑκαστου* random man," for *εὐτυχιστοὺς*)—

τλήμονες γὰρ αἰχμαλῶτων

ἀνδρῶν ἐκ τυχόντος (ὡς

δυσμενῶν ὑπερτίμων)

ἡλπίς ἐστι νύκτερον τίλος μολεῖν,

(καλῶντων ἀλγίων ἐπιρροδόν.

στὰς must agree with *τίλος*—rather harsh; and *στὰς*, that this is a new misery superadded—
I have changed the singulars, *δυσμενῶν*, to plurals.

ὅτι στήν ἢ λέγειν τὰ καίρια, ought, I think, to
ἔξ ἧς τὰ καὶ βλαστάνει βουλευματα.

600. I cannot think that *τὴν μακρὰν πόλιν* is right. Surely *τὴν μακρὰν* must agree with *πομπήν*. Perhaps *πόλιν*, for *πόλιν*, is all that we need. The sense will be, "who trail the procession which is long to come back," i.e., who go on a march from which they will never return.

722. The old text *κατὰρας θλαψίφρονος Οἰδιπόδα*, which is weak in metre, seems to me only to need *δ'* after *θλαψίφρονος*, and a comma after *κατὰρας*. This makes the syntax less prosaic and less abrupt.

731. *ἐπεὶ δ' ἂν αὐτοὶ κτάνωσι | αὐτοδύϊκτοι θύνοσι, | καὶ χθονία κόως πῖγ |*—so stood the old text. The second and third lines wrongly begin with a choriamb. For *καὶ χθονία* we may confidently write *καύχωρία*, since the scholiast explains it, *πατρία γῆ*. In place of *αὐτοδύϊκτοι*, we may read *ἀντιδύϊκτοι* or *σφαγῇ δαίκτοι*, adopting, with Dindorf, *αὐτοκτόνους* (or else *αὐτοκτόνῳ σφαγῇ*) for *αὐτοὶ κτάνωσι*. In the antistrophe, the old *παραισάσιαν* seems to have been written to agree with the corrupt strophe. Perhaps *παραισάσιαν*, equivalent to a double iamb, was from the poet.

747. *ἐκ φθλῶν ἀβουλιῶν* is, I think, Dindorf's last conjecture. It seems to me right.

750. That *ὅσπερ μητρὸς ἀγνῶν . . .* is correct cannot be doubted; hence we are forced to conclude that *ρίξαν* is a direct accusative after *ἔτλα*; which (if correct) we must then interpret *portulit*; though we seem to need *tulit*, *extulit*, "brought forth." Dindorf changes it to *ἔφλα*, and gives a sense to me unintelligible. (He thinks it is an obscene word.) Now, if it were *ἔφλας*, *gushed forth*, this might be equivalent to *brought forth*, *budded forth*. If we join *ἔτλα σπείρας*, as is natural, there is nothing to govern *ρίξαν*.

765. *τὰ δ' ὅλῳ τελλόμεν' οὐ παρέρχεται*. Metre confutes this. As a rough approximation to truth, I advance *τὸ δ' ἄλγος ἐπὶ μᾶλλον παρτρέχει*.

781. *κρυσσοπέκτων* is clearly absurd, and *τῶν* is offensive. For *τῶν* we might read *μέν*, only that so obviously fit a word would not easily have been changed to *τῶν*. To *κρυσσοπέκτων*

ων, χρηστοτάτων comes near enough, but is less Æschylean by far than *παιχρηστοτάτων, most serviceable for everything*—a suitable epithet for *ἀμύμων*. Then *τῶν* stands in place of the *ων*. Besides, *ἐπλάγχθη* is an astonishing word here. I cannot suppress the suspicion that the right word is *ἐβλάφη*.

782. It is incredible that the poet should have written *ἀραιὰς ἀράς*, as in the old text; and to alter *ἀραιὰς* into *ἀράς* makes a very weak tautology. In favour of *ἐπικροτο τροφᾶς* appeal may be made to Soph. Œd. Col. 1363; nevertheless I feel some conviction that the poet wrote *ἀγρίας τροφούς*, *fierce nurses*, which he then expounds to be the 'Αράς. I do not find the syntax of *καὶ σφε* to be good. The metre of *τίαναις δ' ἄγρίας* is right; but that of *ἀραιὰς* is wrong.

826. I think the true text must be—

οἱ δὲ ὁρθῶς κατ' ἐπωνυμίαν

[πάρτ' ἐτεοκλείς] καὶ πολυνεικεῖς—

in fact, *καὶ* demands *ἐτεοκλείς* preceding.

852. The old text cannot be right. What *ἄστονον* should be is very obscure. I have thought of *ἡστροφον*. *Ναύστολον* perhaps should be *νεκύστολον*. Then, omitting *ἀνάλιον* as an interpretation, and changing *τὰν* into *γὰν*, we should get—

τὰν ἡστροφον μελίγκροκον

νεκύστολιν θεωρίδ' [εἰς]

τὰν ἀστυζῆ Ἀπόλλωνι γὰν,

πάνδοκον εἰς ἀφανὴ τε χέρσον.

887, 889. The words *πλαγὰν* and *ἐννέτω* seem out of place,

I wish to read—

δι' εὐωνύμων τετυμμένοι.

(στρ.)

τετυμμένοι δὲ δ'. ὁμοσ-

πόρων γε πλευρωμάτων

πλαγὰν ἐννέτω.

which answer to

διήκει δὲ καὶ πόλιν στύπος.

(ἄντιστ.)

στίνουσι πύργοι, στίνας

πίδον φιλανδρον' μίνε

κτίαντ' ἐπιγόνους.

hence to read *κτίαντ' ἐγγόνους* for closer agreement of

enduring Titan; none, certainly, which has for a longer period coloured the stream of philosophic thought. The Promethean myth, it must be remembered, was not the invention of either Hesiod or Æschylus; its root, as Dunsen remarks, is older than the Hellenes themselves. Even at the present day, the legend, in its rudest form, may be traced among the Iranian tribes of the Caucasus, while in our western world it has inspired the genius of more than one great poet of modern times.

The three dramas of which the trilogy consisted are believed to have been "Prometheus, the Fire-bringer," "Prometheus Bound," and "Prometheus Unbound," of which the second has alone survived.* Prometheus there appears as the champion and benefactor of mankind, whose condition, at the close of the Titanic age, is depicted as weak and miserable in the extreme:

"Seeing, they saw in vain;

Hearing, they heard not; but like shapes in dreams,
Through the long time all things at random mixed."

Zeus, it is said, proposed to annihilate those puny ephemerals, and to plant upon the earth a new race in their stead. Prometheus represents himself as having frustrated this design, and as being consequently subjected, for the sake of mortals, to the most agonising pain, inflicted by the remorseless cruelty of Zeus. We

* Gruppe has, I think, satisfactorily refuted the plausible hypothesis of Hermann, that the "Prometheus Unbound" was composed prior to, and independently of, the "Prometheus Bound."

have thus the Titan, the symbol of finite reason and free will, depicted as the sublime philanthropist, while Zeus, the supreme deity of Hellas, is portrayed as the cruel and obdurate despot, a character peculiarly revolting to Athenian sentiment.

The attempt to explain this apparent anomaly has given rise to a variety of theories and speculations. It is urged by some that at the time of Æschylus so sharp a line was drawn, in the minds of educated men, between religion and mythology, that the latter was accepted simply as poetical imagery, and was employed by the poet without any definite moral aim. Others imagine, with Welcker, that Æschylus, as a contemporary of Zenocharis, and one initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, maintained an antagonistic attitude towards the traditional creed, and that in the Promethean trilogy he seized the opportunity to enter his protest against it, by representing the head of the Olympian system under so revolting an aspect. It must be remembered, however, that the Athenian drama formed part of a solemn religious festival, celebrated by the entire population, and that the popular theology was intertwined with the national and political life not only of Athens, but of Hellas. The magnificent statues of Pallas Athena and of Olympian Zeus, executed at enormous cost by Phidias, the contemporary of Æschylus, were doubtless regarded by the multitudes assembled at the national festivals as symbols of divine and very awful realities; and if we turn to the remaining dramas of the poet we find his delineation of these divinities in harmony with

this conception. Zeus, more especially, is represented as uniting in himself the sublimest attributes of deity.

The Chorus, in their solemn invocation (Ag. 160), lay peculiar stress upon the name of Zeus, as the supreme deity, the prime source of consolation and of wisdom. He is elsewhere portrayed as the almighty ruler (Sup. 795), who by ancient law directs destiny (Sup. 655), and without whose will nothing is accomplished for mortals (Sup. 804). He is invoked as king of kings, most blest among the blest, of powers on high most perfect power (Sup. 519). He is likewise apostrophised as father, creator, king, supreme artificer, wielding no delegated sway, and whose deed is prompt as his word to execute the designs of his deep-counselling mind (Sup. 587). He is the all-seeing father (Sup. 130); lord of countless ages (Sup. 567); the guardian of the guest (Ag. 353); the punisher of overweening pride (Per. 822); the upholder of the righteous law of retribution (Ag. 154). Many more passages of a similar character might be adduced, from which it would appear that the poet, though not emancipated from the errors and limitations of Polytheism, had, nevertheless, risen to the sublime ideal of one supreme ruler, whose righteous will was identified with the eternal decrees of destiny. Instead of placing himself in antagonism with the popular religion, he seems rather, as the prophet of Polytheism, to have striven to elevate the popular conception of Zeus, and of the other Hellenic divinities, more especially Apollo and Pallas Athena, who are represented in the *Orestia* as the

willing but subordinate executors of their father's will. It seems improbable that in the Promethean trilogy alone he should assume an attitude towards the popular religion utterly irreconcilable with the tendencies manifested in his remaining works; the apparent contradiction has doubtless arisen from the loss of the concluding drama. I agree with those critics who think that if we possessed it we should see the majesty of Zeus fully vindicated, and reconciliation established between the contending powers.

As it seems unreasonable to accept, without qualification, the gross picture of Zeus as represented, in the extant drama, by his exasperated adversary, Prometheus, so we must look elsewhere for the true ground of the antagonism subsisting between him and the Olympian divinities, all of whom are arrayed against him. Though the Promethean myth, as related by Plato, in the "*Protagoras*," differs in many essential features from the version of *Æschylus*, yet the fundamental thought there embodied is so completely in harmony with the teaching of the prophet-bard, that it may be referred to as, perhaps, throwing light upon the moral significance of the trilogy. In the "*Protagoras*" a distinction is drawn between the wisdom which ministers to physical well-being, and political wisdom which enables men to live in organized communities. Prometheus is represented as having endowed men with the former, but as unable to invest them with the latter, which involved the exercise of justice, and was under the special guardianship of Zeus. Now it is this

quality of justice which was bestowed upon mortals by Zeus that Æschylus extols with peculiar emphasis. "Riches," he says, "afford no bulwark to him who spurns the mighty altar of justice" (Ag. 381); firm based is justice (Cho. 635); "all must perish who withstand her mandates" (Cho. 630). Justice is styled the daughter of Zeus (Cho. 934); reverence for her altar is characterized as the sum of wisdom (Eum. 510).

It was, moreover, an idea familiar to the Æschylean age that all excellence was the gift of the gods, more especially of Zeus, and that it could not be obtained without their intervention. "God alone is good," sang Simonides; "no one wins virtue without the aid of the gods, neither a state nor an individual." "Zeus, the great virtues attend upon mortals from thee," sang Pindar; "and," he adds, "prosperity lives longer with those who revere thee, but with perverse minds it does not equally abide, thriving for all time" (Isthm. Ode iii.) "Through the favour of God man blooms with a wise heart."* "An untainted mind," according to Æschylus, is "heaven's first gift." The Chorus remind Prometheus of "the dreamlike feebleness that fotters the blind race of mortals" (Pro. 556); an expression which recalls Pindar's description of men as "the dream of a shadow;" "yet," he adds, "when splendour given by the god comes to them, a brilliant light falls upon men and a sweet life" (Pyth. Ode viii. Epode 5). Not only was Prometheus unable to endow mortals

* These passages are cited by Schoemann.

with these higher attributes; by conferring upon them benefits contrary to the will of Zeus, he, in fact, alienated them from the gods, in fellowship with whom, according to the Greek ideal, men found their highest well-being.

He may thus be regarded as personifying that insurgent condition of the will which, blind to the perception of higher truth, is full of arrogant self-confidence and all-defying pride. In many respects he offers a parallel to Milton's Satan, "a creation requiring in its author almost the spiritual energy with which he invests the fallen Seraph." The Titan chained to his solitary rock, and the archangel prone upon the lake of fire, stand alone, the one in ancient, the other in modern literature, as stupendous examples of indomitable will; of both it may be said with truth that, "what chains us, as with a resistless spell, in such a character, is spiritual might made visible by the racking pains which it overpowers."*

For the Titan, however, there is deliverance, and the extant fragments of the concluding member of the trilogy enable us to form some idea as to the agency by which it was accomplished. At the opening of the "Prometheus Unbound" the Titan was seen brought once more to light, after the lapse of ages, from the abyss into which he had been hurled at the conclusion of the "Prometheus Bound." He was still chained to the rock, with the additional torment of the eagle, which daily preyed upon his liver. The punishments

* Channing.

ship of Zeus with mortals, of which Io was one of the first recipients. Hence the significance of her appearance in the "Prometheus Bound." She, like the Titan, resisted the divine will, and, like him, must suffer the penalty of her rebellion; accordingly the account of her sufferings, as, wailing and distraught, she pursues her toilsome wanderings, serves to heighten the impression of the cruel tyranny of Zeus, which it is the object of that drama to produce.

In "The Suppliants," however, Zeus appears in relation to Io, not as the obdurate tyrant, but as the beneficent deity, whose severest judgments issue in blessings to the individual and to mankind. Doubtless, under this aspect he would have been represented in the third member of the Promethean trilogy.

Herakles inquires from Prometheus his way to the gardens of the Hesperides; the Titan, in reply, describes his journey thither, and announces the dangers which he will have to encounter. Forthwith the eagle appears, winging its flight towards Prometheus: Herakles utters the exclamation, "Archer Apollo, surely guide mine arrow," draws his bow, and slays the pest.

In what manner the subsequent liberation of Prometheus was effected we have no means of determining; whether Herakles himself unloosed his chains, or whether this was accomplished through the intervention of Hermes, or some other divinity; whether Herakles prevailed upon Zeus to accept Choiron as a substitute for Prometheus, and whether Choiron voluntarily

descended into Hades; and, finally, whether the Gods appeared upon the scene, to celebrate, with Prometheus and the Titans, the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis—these are questions to which neither the fragments themselves, nor the testimony of other witnesses, enable us to return a satisfactory answer, and I consequently abstain from entering upon them.

The chief interest, however, centres in the mind of Prometheus, and upon the agency by which the arch-rebel was transformed into the willing subject and minister of Zeus. The spectacle of his brother and sister Titans and Titanesses redeemed from durance would tend to correct the false impression which had possessed his mind respecting the ruthless tyranny of Zeus, and consequently the gnawing desire to witness his humiliation would give place to the unreluctant recognition of his supremacy. He would accordingly no longer refuse to reveal the secret, upon the disclosure of which he, in his blindness, imagined the maintenance of that supremacy to depend.* In Hesiod Zeus is represented as allowing himself to be apparently deceived by Prometheus, when he taught men to bring worthless offerings to the Gods; the Titan there appears as the trickster caught at last in his own wiles. That the reign of Zeus, whom the poet elsewhere extols as "The Lord of ceaseless ages," "Most blessed among the blest," should be conceived of by him as contingent upon the word of Prometheus, seems to me incredible. The voluntary revelation of his supposed

* This view is expounded at greater length by Schoemann.

secret was the token that the all-defying rebel was transformed into the willing subject and minister of Zeus.

It is related* that Zeus, when he released Prometheus from his chains, required him, as a slight voluntary punishment, to bind his head with branches of the agave-cactus (*Agave*), a plant frequently employed for religious purposes.

The same symbolic signification was, in after times, attached to the ring of Prometheus, referred to by Catullus and Pliny. The former relates that when Prometheus appeared at the marriage festival of Peleus and Thetis, he wore a ring, as a slight token of his ancient punishment:

* *Extenuata gerens veteris vestigia pene; †
Quam quondam illici restrictus membra catena
Fussulvit, pendens e verticibus praecepta.*"

Not as an ornament, says Pliny (xxxiii. 4), has Prometheus worn the iron ring, but as a chain; and (xvii. 1), as a slight token of punishment, a piece of the snail to which he had been fastened was inserted in the ring instead of a gem.

The iron finger-ring is not, like the lugos-crown, expressly referred back to Æschylus; the same signification, however, attaches to both, and it is not probable,

* As his authority for this statement, Welcker refers to Athenæus and Menælotus.

† This and the following references are quoted from Welcker.

as Welcker remarks, that they should not have been associated in the ancient legend.

Thus the dignity of man, of whom Prometheus may be regarded as the representative, is fully vindicated, when, instead of rebelling against the restraints of law, he joyfully accepts them, and finds his true liberty in obedience; thenceforth the crown, the token of submission, is transformed into an honourable adornment, and the iron ring becomes the symbol of a holy consecration.*

Thus we may imagine was brought about the reconciliation of the powers whose antagonism formed the subject of the "Prometheus Bound." We cannot but admire the marvellous art with which the poet, while making his personages the representatives of certain abstract principles, at the same time endows them with life and sharply-defined individuality. This impression of reality is heightened in Prometheus by the allusion of the Chorus to his marriage with their sister Hesione. The chorus of colossal Titans, delivered at length from their mighty toils, and assisting at the deliverance of Prometheus, seems to me one of the grandest conceptions that ever entered a poet's mind. It harmonizes with the Æschylean conception of Zeus, as head of the Olympian hierarchy, reigning supreme in the domain of nature and of mind.

In concluding this very inadequate study of a great subject, I will allude, in a few words, to the theory propounded by Professor Kuhn, with reference to the

* Welcker.

Promethean myth.* He considers the name of the Titan to be derived from the Sanscrit word *Pramantha*, the instrument used for kindling fire. The root *wand*, or *want*, implies rotatory motion, and the word *wanthami*, used to denote the process of fire-kindling, acquired the secondary sense of snatching away; hence we find another word of the same stock, *pramatha*, signifying theft.

The word *wanthami* passed into the Greek language, and became the verb *wanthano*, to learn; that is to say, to appropriate knowledge; whence *prometheia*, foreknowledge, forethought. Prometheus, the fire-bringer, is the *Pramantha* personified, and finds his prototype in the Aryan *Matarisvan*, a divine or semi-divine personage, closely associated with Agni, the fire-god of the Vedas. We have thus another curious instance of the common elements which may be detected in the Vedic and Hellenic mythology, while the development of the Promethean myth affords an instructive illustration of the mode in which words, originally having reference to natural phenomena, gradually became invested with new and more spiritual significance when transplanted to the soil of Hellas.

* An epitome of Professor Kuhn's work, entitled "*Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks*," may be found in Kelly's "*Indo-European Tradition and Folk-lore*," from which the above notice is abridged.

With stubborn shackles to this desert height, 20
 Where neither voice nor form of living man
 Shall meet thy ken; but, shrivelled by the blaze
 Of the bright sun, thy skin's fair bloom shall wither;
 Welcome to thee shall glittering-vestured night
 O'erveil the brightness; welcome too the sun
 Shall with new beams scatter the morning rime;
 Thus overmore shall weight of present ill
 Outwear thee: for as yet is no one born
 Who may relieve thy pain: such mood hast thou
 From mortal-loving wont;—for thou, a god,
 Not crouching to the wrath of gods, didst bring
 To mortal men high gifts, transgressing right. 30
 Hence art thou doom'd this joyless rock to guard,
 Erect, unlooping, bending not the knee;
 And many a moan shalt pour and many a plaint,
 Vainly; for Zeus obdurate is of heart;
 And harsh is everyone when now of sway.

STRENGTH.

Well! why delay and bootless pity vent?
 This god, to gods most hateful, why not hate,
 Who thy prerogative to men betrayed?

HERMES.

Awful is kindred blood, and fellowship.

STRENGTH.

True, but the father's word to disobey— 40
 How suiteth that? fearest not that still more?

For iron's clanging note
 Piercing our caves' recesses rang,
 And from me bashful shyness smote ;—
 Forthwith on wing'd car, unshod, aloft I sprang.

PROMETHEUS.

Alas! alas! Woo! woo!
 Prolife Tethys' offspring, progeny 140
 Of sire Oceanos, whose sleepless flow
 Engirdles the whole earth; behold and see
 In what dire bonds unconquid watch I keep,
 Clasp'd to the summit of this rock-bound steep.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

I see, Prometheus, and through fear
 Doth mist of many tears mine eyes below,
 As, 'gainst this rock, parched up, in tortures drear
 Of adamantine bonds, thy form I view. 150

For helmsmen now of sway
 Olympus hold; by laws now-made
 Zeus wickloeth empire, impulse-awayed;
 While what was grand of old he swoops away.

PROMETHEUS.

Neath earth, 'neath Hades' shade-receiving plains,
 Sheer down to Tartaros' unmeasured gloom
 Would he had hurled me ruthless, bound with chains
 That none may loose,—So then at this my doom 160
 Had no one mock'd,—nor god, nor other kind.
 But now most wretched, sport of every wind,
 The' laughter of my foes, I bear these pains.

Chorus. STROPHE II.

Who of the gods a heart doth own
 So hard, to mock at thy despair?
 Who at thy woes, save Zeus alone,
 Doth not thine anguish share?
 But ruthless still, with soul unbent,
 The heavenly race he tames, nor will refrain 170
 Till satel to his heart's content;
 Or till another, by some cunning snare,
 Wrest from his grasp the firmly guarded reign.

PROMETHEUS.

Yet o'en of me although now wrung
 In stubborn chains shall he have need,
 This ruler of the blest—to read
 The counsel now by which his way
 And honours shall be stript away.
 But not persuasion's honied tongue
 My steadfast soul shall charm; 180
 Nor will I, crouching in alarm,
 Divulge the secret, till these savage chains
 Be loose, and yield requital for my pains.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

Daring thou art and yieldlest nought
 For bitter agony; with tongue
 Unbridled thou art all too free.
 But by keen fear my heart is stung;
 I tremble for thy doom—ah, me!
 Thy barque into what haven may'st thou steer, 190

Of these dire pangs the end to see?
For inaccessible, of mood severe
Is Kronos' son, inflexible his thought.

PROMETHEUS.

That Zeus is stern full well I know,
And by his will doth measure right.
But, smitten by this destined blow,
Softened shall one day be his might.
Then curbing his harsh temper, he
Full eagerly will hither wend,
To join in league and amity with me,
Eager no less to welcome him as friend.

200

Chorus.

To us thy tale unfold; the whole speak out;
Upon what charge Zeus, seizing thee, doth thus
Outrage with harsh and ignominious pain?
Inform us if the telling breed no harm.

PROMETHEUS.

Grievous to me it is these things to tell,
Grief to be silent: trouble every way.
When first the heavenly powers were moved to rage,
And in opposing factions ranged their might,
These wishing Kronos from his seat to hurl
That Zeus forsooth might reign; these, counter-wise, 210
Resolved that o'er the gods Zeus no'er should rule;
Then I with sagest counsel strove to move
The Titans, progeny of heaven and earth,

But strove in vain; for they, in stubborn souls
Of crafty wiles disdainful, thought by force,
An easy task, the mastery to gain.
But me, not once but oft, my mother Themis,
And Earth (one shape with many names) had told
Prophetic, how the future should be wrought.
That not by strength of thew or hardiment 220
Should mastery be compassed, but by guile;
But when this lore I did expound in words,
They deigned me not a single look; whereon,
Of courses free to choose, the wisest seemed
Leagued with my mother, of my own free will
The will of Zeus to meet, siding with him,
And by my counsels black-roofed Tartaros'
Murky abyss primeval Kronos now
Engulfs with his allies: such benefits
From me the tyrant of the gods received, 230
And hath requited with these base returns.
For, somehow, cleaveth aye to tyranny
This fell disease; to have no faith in friends.
But touching which ye ask me, on what charge
He thus maltreats me; this will I make clear.
When seated on his father's throne, forthwith,
He to the several gods was dealing out
Their several honours, marshalling his realm;
But he of toil-worn mortals took no count;
The race entire he ardently desired 240
To quench, and plant a new one in its stead.
And none but I opposed his purposes;
I dared alone;—I saved the mortal race

Chorus.

Have now these short-lived creatures flame-eyed fire?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, and by it full many arts will learn.

Chorus.

Upon such charges doth Zeus outrage thee,
Nor aught abateth of thy miseries?
To this dire struggle is no term assigned?

PROMETHEUS.

No other but what seemeth good to him.

Chorus.

How may this be? What hope? Seest thou not
That thou hast erred? But in what way hast erred,
That to unfold,—while me it gladdens not,
To thee is pain. Forbear we then this theme.
But seek from this keen struggle some escape. 270

PROMETHEUS.

Whoso his foot holdeth unmesh'd of harm,
For him 'tis easy to exhort and warn
One sorely plagued. But this I all foreknow;
Of will, free will, I erred, nor will gainsay it.
By aiding men I wrought myself these pangs.
Not that such guerdon I did e'er conceive;—
To wither piteous on sky-piercing rocks,
Doom'd to this drear and solitary height.
But ye, no further wail my present woes,
But, on the ground alighting, hear from me 280



Spectator of my pangs? How hast thou dared
Quitting thy namesake flood, thy rock-roof'd caves
Self-wrought, this iron-teeming land to reach?
Art come indeed to gaze upon my doom, 810
And with my grievous woes to sympathize?
A spectacle behold;—this friend of Zeus,
This co-appointer of his sovereignty,
By what dire anguish I by him am bow'd.

OCEANOS.

I see, Prometheus, and would fain to thee,
All subtle as thou art, best counsel give.
Know thine own self, thy manners mould anew,
Since now the monarch who now rules the gods;
But if thou thus harsh, keenly-whetted words 820
Still hurlest, Zeus, though thron'd so far aloft,
Mayhap may hear thee, so the pangs which now
His wrath inflicts but childish sport may soon.
But come, O much enduring, quell thy rage;
Seek thou releasement from these miseries,
Stale may appear to thee the words I speak.
Yet such the penalty that waits, Prometheus,
On a too haughty tongue; But thou, e'en now
Newise art humbled, nor dost yield to ill,
But to the present wouldest add new woe.
Therefore, I charge thee, hearkening my rode, 830
Kick not against the pricks, since harsh the king
Who now holds sway, accountable to none.
And now I go and will forthwith essay
If I avail to free thee from these toils.

... thou calm nor over-rash of speech ;
Knowest thou not, being exceeding wise,
That to the froward tongue chastisement cleaves.

PROMETHEUS.

Much joy I give thee scatheless as thou art,
Though in all plots and daring leagued with me.
But now let be ; forbear thy toil : for him
Persuade thou canst not : him no suasion moves ;
Nay, lest the journey breed thee harm, beware.

310

OCEANOS.

More cunning art thou others to advise
Than thine own self. By deed I judge, not we
But, fixed is my resolve, hold me not back.
For sure I am, yea, sure, that Zeus to me
Will grant this boon, and loose thee from these

PROMETHEUS.

For this I praise thee, nor will cease to praise ;
For nought of kindly zeal thou lackest ; yet,
Toil not, for vain, nor helpful unto me,
Thy toil will prove,—if toil indeed thou wilt ;—
But hold thee quiet rather, keep aloof.
For I, though in mishap, not therefore wish
Wide-spreading fellowship of woe to see.
No truly, for my brother Atlas' doom
Grieves me, who, stationed on the western verge,
The pillars on his shoulders beareth up
Of heaven and earth ; burthen of painful grasp.
So, in Cilician caves with ruth I saw

Prometheus Bound.

Their earth-born tenant, hostile prodigy,
The hundred-headed, curb'd by violence
Raging Typhœus, all the gods who brave
Hissing out slaughter from his horrid jaw
Forth from his eyeballs flash'd a hideous ;
As though by force the reign of heaven to
But on him fell the sleepless dart of Zeus,
The thunder-bolt down-rushing, breathing
Which him from his high-worded boasting
Prostrate ; for, smitten to his inmost reins,
With strength burnt out, he lightning-blasted
And now his frame, helpless and sprawling
Hard by the salt-sea narrows, sorely prest
Beneath the roots of Ætna. Seated there,
Upon the topmost peaks, Hephestos smites
The molten masses. Thence one day shall but
Torrents of fire, devouring with fierce jaws
The level fields of fruitful Sicily.
Such rage Typhœus shall anew belch forth
With scorching missiles of fire-breathing storm
Insatiate ; by the fierce bolt of Zeus
Blasted, but unconsum'd. No tiro thou,
Nor dost my teaching need. Save thou thyself
As best thou knowest how. But be assured
I to the dregs my present doom will drain,
Until the heart of Zeus relax its ire.

OCEANOS.

Know'st thou not this, Prometheus, that wise words
To a distemper'd mind physicians are ?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, if well-timed they mollify the heart,
Nor with rude pressure chafe its swelling ire.

OCEANOS.

True: but if forethought be with boldness leagu'd,
What lurking mischief seest thou? Instruct me. 390

PROMETHEUS.

Light-minded folly and superfluous toil.

OCEANOS.

Still from this ailment let me ail, since most
The wise it profiteth not wise to seem.

PROMETHEUS.

But haply mine this error may appear.

OCEANOS.

Certes, thine argument remains me home.

PROMETHEUS.

Good! Lost thy plaint for me work thee ill-will.

OCEANOS.

With him now-seated on the all-ruling throne?

PROMETHEUS.

Of him beware that ne'er his heart be vex'd.

OCEANOS.

Thy plight, Prometheus, is my monitor.

PROMETHEUS.

Speed forth! Begone! Cherish thy present mood. 400

OCEANOS.

To me right eager hast thou bayed that word,
For my four-footed bird, with wings outspread,
Fane the clear track of æther; fain, in sooth,
In wonted stall to bend the weary knee.

[Exit OCEANOS.]

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Prometheus, I bewail thy doom of woe;
From their moist fountains rise,
Flooding my tender eyes,
Tears that my cheek bedew. O, cruel blow! 410
For Zeus by his own laws doth now hold sway,
And to the elder gods a haughty spear display.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Rings the whole country now with echoing groans.
The grand time-honour'd sway,
Mighty now passed away,
Of thee and of thy brethren, it bemoans.
And all who dwell on Asia's hallowed shore 420
Thy loud-resounding griefs with kindred grief
deplora.

STROPHE II.

And Colchis' virgin daughters,
In fight a dauntless train;
And round Mæotis' waters
The Scythian tribes, holding earth's outmost reign.

ANASTROPHE II.

And those with sharp spears clanging
 Who dwell, a hostile power,
 Fortress'd on rocks o'erhanging, 430
 Near Caucasos,—Arabia's martial flower.*

ERODE.

One only of the gods before thus bent
 Have I beheld, 'neath adamantine pains,
 Atlas, the Titan, who with many a groan
 Still on his back sustains,
 Vast burthen, the revolving firmament.
 Chiming in cadence ocean-waves resound; 440
 Moans the abyss, and Hades' murky gloom
 Bellows responsive in the depth profound;
 While fountains of clear-flowing rivers moan
 His piteous doom.

PROMETHEUS.

Think not that I through pride or stubbornness
 Keep silence; nay, my brooding heart is gnawed
 Seeing myself thus marred with contumely;
 And yet what other but myself marked out
 To these now gods their full prerogatives.

* The word Arabia, with Xenophon, included Mesopotamia, as part of the land on which Arabs roam. My friend Professor Newman conjectures that Marlin, built on a limestone rock, which is said to be 2000 feet high, was the city *Ἰψικηρυκός*, of which the poet had heard. The Arabs still roam up to the base of this little mountain. No Greek, in Æschylus's day, knew the geography of Courdistân; so it was natural to include the whole of the wonderful "Asiatic Switzerland" in Caucasos.

Chorus.

Unseemly woe thou bearest. Driven astray
Flounders thy judgment, and like sorry leech
Falling distemper'd, spiritless thou art.
Nor remedies canst find thyself to cure.

480

PROMETHEUS.

Hearken the rest, and thou wilt marvel more
What arts and what resources I devised.
This chief of all; if any one fell sick,
No help there was, diet nor liniment,
Nor healing draught; but men, for lack of drugs
Wasted away, till I to them revealed
Commixtures of assuaging remedies
Which may disorders manifold repel.
Of prophecies the various modes I fixed,
And among dreams did first discriminate
The truthful vision. Voices ominous,
Hard to interpret, I to them made known:
And way-side auguries, the flight of birds
With crooked talons, clearly I defined;
Showed by their nature which auspicious are,
And which ill-omened— aught the modes of life
Native to each, and what, among themselves
Their feuds, affections, and confederacies.
Touching the smoothness of the vital parts,
And what the hue most pleasing to the gods,
I taught them, and the mottled symmetry
Of gall and liver. Thighs encased in fat
With the long chine I burnt, and mortals guided

490

500

To a mysterious art; of fire-eyed signs,
I purged the vision, over filmed before.
Such boons I gave; but for those other helps
To men, concealed beneath the earth which lie,
Brass, iron, silver, gold, who dares affirm
That he before me had discovered them?
No one, I know, but who would idly vaunt.
In one brief word learn thou the sum of all.
All arts to mortals from Prometheus came.

510

Chorus.

Not now for mortals beyond measure care
Thy hapless self neglecting; since, in sooth,
Good hope have I that loosen'd from these bonds
In might thou'lt prove an equal match for Zeus.

PROMETHEUS.

Not yet nor thus is it ordained that fate
These things shall compass; but by myriad pangs 520
And tortures bount, so shall I 'scape those bonds;
Art than necessity is weaker far.

Chorus.

Then who is holmsman of necessity?

PROMETHEUS.

The triform Fates and ever-mindful Furies.

Chorus

Is Zeus in might less absolute than these?

PROMETHEUS.

Even he shall

Chorus.

What is ordain'd for Zeus, save aye to reign?

PROMETHEUS.

No further may'st thou question; urge me not.

Chorus.

Deep mystery, methinks, thou keepest veil'd.

PROMETHEUS.

Turn to some other theme; not meet it is
Now to discourse of this, but close to wrap
In strictest silence; for, this secret kept,
Unusually bonds I 'scape and tortures keen.

530

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Never may Zeus, who sole doth reign,
My will with adverse might oppose;
Nor I to serve the gods refrain,
With rites of slaughter'd kine, where flows
Father Oceanos' exhaustless tide;
No'er may my words transgress.
Deep in my heart's recess,
Unflinch'd for aye may this resolve abide.

540

ANTISTROPHE I.

'Tis sweet to run life's long career
By hopes attended strong and bold,
Feeding the heart in blithesome cheer;
But thee I shudder to behold

By myriad tortures rack'd in sore distress. 550
For thou, in sheer self-will,
Unaw'd of Zeus, hast still
Mortals, Prometheus, honour'd in excess.

STROPHE II.

What boots it, friend, when grace by grace
Is unrequited? In distress
Say, from ephemera what aid?
Hast not discerned the foebloodness,
Dream-like and weak, that man's blind race
Cramps and confines? No scheme by mortals laid 560
The harmony of Zeus shall o'er transgress.

ANTISTROPHE II.

This lesson from thy doom of pain
I learnt, Prometheus. On mine ear
Alighteth now far other strain
Than that, 'mid Hymeneal mirth,
Which erst, the bath and couch beside,
I sang, what time our sister dear,
Hecione, as thine espoused bride 570
Thou wast escorting, won by gifts of worth.

[Enter Io.]

Io.*

What country? What race? who is he,
This man, whom, rock-bound, I survey,

* For an exposition of the theory which resolves the
of Io into the life of the moon, in its several phases from
full to new, and then back to the full again, the reader is
referred to Cox's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," ii. 139.

Storm-battered? What trespass hath thee
Thus doomed to destruction? Oh, say,
To what region of earth have I wandered, forlorn?

Ah me! The dire anguish! Ah me!
Again the barbed pest doth assail!
Thou phantom of Argos,* earth-born;
Avert him, O earth! Ah, I quail, 580
The herdsman beholding with myriad eyes.
With crafty look, onward, still onward he hies;
Not even in death is he hid 'neath the earth;
But, o'en from the shades coming back,
He hounds me, forlorn one, in anguish of dearth,
To roam by the sea-waves' salt track.

ΣΤΕΡΟΠΗ.

Still droneth the wax-moulded reed,
Shrill-piping, a sleep-breathing strain. 590
Ah me! The dire anguish! Woo! Woo!
Ah, whither on earth do these far-roamings lead?
What trespass canst find, son of Kronos, in me,
That thou yokest me over to pain?

Woo! Ah, woo!
And wherefore with brizo-driven fear torture so
A wretched one, phrenzied in brain?
Oh burn me with fire, or o'erwhelm 'neath the soil,
Or fling me to ravenous beasts of the sea.

* Argos Panóptes, according to modern mythologists, is
the star-illuminated sky watching over the moon as she
wanders—

“pale for very weariness
Of climbing heaven.”

Cox's Mythology of the Aryan Nations.

nds to ope the lips.
giver of fire to mortals. 630

Io.
common benefit
art suffering thus?

PROMETHEUS.
aging my dirge of woe.

Io.
ot vouchsafe this boon?

PROMETHEUS.
nothing will I hide.

Io.
d, thus fastened thee?

PROMETHEUS.
was Hephaestus' hand.

Io.
st thou the forfeit pay?

PROMETHEUS.
l thee may suffice.

Io.
mings, tell the goal. 640
outcast, yet must run?

PROMETHEUS.
better than to learn.

Io.
Yet from me hide not what I needs must suffer.

PROMETHEUS.
Not chary am I of such boon to thee.

Io.
Then why delayest to make known the whole?

PROMETHEUS.
Nothing I grudge, but shrink to vex thy heart.

Io.
Care not for me more than to me is sweet.

PROMETHEUS.
Thine eager wish constrains my tongue; give ear.

Chorus.
Not yet: to me my dole of pleasure deal;
Enquire we first into this maiden's plague, 650
Herself relating her sore-wasting fortunes.
Her residue of toil then teach us thou.

PROMETHEUS.
Io, thy task it is their wish to grant,
The more so as thy father's sisters they.
Besides, fair guerdon waits on lengthened tale,
When to deplore and wail one's evil plight
Draws from the listeners the kindly tear.

Io.
I know not how I can deny your wish,

So in clear word all ye desire to know
 That shall ye hear;—Yet am I shamed to tell 660
 Wherefore on me, forlorn one, burst the storm
 Heaven-sent and whence this form's disfigurement.
 For evermore would nightly visions haunt
 My virgin chambers, gently urging me
 With soothing words;—"O damsel, highly blest,
 Why longer live in maidenhood when thee
 Wait lofliest nuptials? For by passion's dart
 Inflamed is Zeus for thee and fain would share
 The yoke of Kypria. Spurn not thou, O child,
 The couch of Zeus, but to the grassy mead 670
 Of Lerna hie thee, to thy father's herds
 And cattle-stalls, that so the eye of Zeus
 From longing may find respite." By such dreams
 From night to night still was I visited,
 Unhappy one; till, taking heart at length,
 My night-born visions to my sire I told.
 Then he to Pytho many a herald sent
 And to Dodona; seeking to be taught
 How best, by deed or word, to please the gods.
 But they returned, announcing oracles
 Of riddling import, vague and hard to spell. 680
 At length to Inachos came clear response,
 By voice oracular commanding him
 From home and father-land to thrust me forth,
 At large to range, as consecrate to heaven,
 Far as earth's utmost bounds. Should he refuse,
 From Zeus would come the fiery thunderbolt,
 And his whole race extirpate utterly.

Then yielding to such Loxian Oracles,
 He drave me forth, and barred me from his home,
 Against his will and mine; but, forcefully,
 The curb of Zeus constrained him this to do. 690
 Forthwith my shape and mind distorted were,
 And horned, as ye behold me, goaded on
 By gad-fly, keen of fang, with frenzied bounds
 I to Kerchneias' limpid current rush'd,
 And fount of Lerna. Then the earth-born herdsman,
 Hot-tempered Argos, ever dogged my steps,
 Gazing upon me with his myriad eyes.*
 But him a sudden and unlooked-for fate
 Did reave of life; but I, brizo-tortured, still 700
 Before the scourge divine am driven on
 From land to land; the past thou hearest; now
 If thou canst tell my future toils, say on,
 Nor, pity-moved, soothe me with lying tales,
 For garbled words, I hold, are basest illa.

Chorus.

Alas! Alas! Hold! Hold!
 Never, oh never, had I thought
 That words with such strange meaning fraught
 Would reach mine ears, 710
 Nor yet that sorrows, insults, fears,

* In the Io myth Hermes appears as the god of the morning, who with his magic rattle lulls even Argos to slumber. The thousand eyes are closed in death as the stars go out when the morning comes, and leave the moon alone.—Cox's *Mythology*, ii. 139.

Dreadful to hear and dreadful to behold
 Would chill my soul with two-edged goad. Ah, no!
 Fate! Fate! I shudder Io's plight to see.

PROMETHEUS.

Too soon thou groanest and art full of fears.
 Forbear till heard the remnant of my tale.

Chorus.

Speak, teach the whole. To ailing ones 'tis sweet
 Clearly their coming sorrow to foreknow.

PROMETHEUS.

Your former boon from me lightly ye won,
 For first ye craved from Io's self to learn 720
 The story of her toil. The rest now hearken,
 What trials this young maid hath yet to bear
 From Hera. Thou, too, seed of Inachos,
 Cast in thy heart my words, that thou in full
 May'st of thy weary travel learn the goal.
 First, turning hence towards the rising sun,
 Traverse uncultured wastes; so shalt thou reach
 The Scythian nomads, who, 'neath wattled roofs,*
 Uplifted dwell on waggons amply-wheeled, 730
 And are accoutred with far-darting bows.
 Approach not these but, skirting with thy foot
 The sounding breakers, bid thee from their land.
 Towards the left the iron-workers dwell,
 The Chalybes, of whom thou must beware,

* The wicker huts in use among the Scythian nomads are described by Herodotus (iv. 46).

As all uncount, of strangers ill-approached.
 Hybristes* river then—not falsely named—
 Thou'lt reach; the ford, for hard it is to cross,
 Attempt not until Caucasos thou gain,
 Highest of mountains, from whose very brow
 The river spouteth forth its might; forthwith
 Its crest surmounting, neighbour to the stars, 740
 Southward direct thy course until thou reach
 The host of man-aborring Amazons,
 Who Thomiscyra, near Thormodon's stream,
 Shall one day people, where the cruel jaw
 Of Salmydessus † hems the briny sea,
 Rude host to sea-men, stop-damo unto ships;
 These will conduct thee and right willingly;
 Then the Kimmerian isthmus ‡ thou shalt gain
 Hard by the narrow portals of the lake,
 Which it behoveth thee with dauntless heart
 To leave, and traverse the Maotic strait; 750

* The river which the poet calls Hybristes (*i.e.*, insolent or violent) agrees with none so well as with the Kouban, which runs down violently from the Caucasos into the Crimean Bosphorus.

† Salmydessos. "This name was originally applied to the whole coast, from the promontory of Thynia to the entrance of the Bosphorus; and it was from this coast that the Black Sea obtained the name of Pontus *"Aferos*, or inhospitable;" afterwards changed to *Euxeinos*, or hospitable.

‡ Leaving the Kimmerian isthmus (the Crimea), she was to cross the Bosphorus, which flows into the Maotic Lake (the Sea of Azov). It may be remarked that in the foregoing account of Io's wanderings no consistency with our known geography is attainable.

Prometheus Bound.

And evermore among mankind shall live
The mighty record of thy passage there,
For men from thee shall call it Bosphoros.
Quitting the plain of Europe, thou shalt come
To Asia's continent.—How think ye? say,
Seems not the monarch of the gods to be
Ruthless alike in all? For he, a god,
Yearning to meet in love a mortal maid,
Upon her did impose these wanderings?
A bitter wooer hast thou found, O maid,
For wedlock bond;—for what thine ears have heard
Account not e'en the prelude to thy toils.

Io.

760

Ah woe is me! Woe! Woe!

PROMETHEUS.

Anew dost shriek and moan? What wilt thou do
When thou the remnant of thy woe hast heard?

Chorus.

How, hast thou aught of sorrow yet to tell?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, sea tempestuous of all-baleful grief.

Io.

What boots it then to live? Why not with speed
Hurl myself headlong from this ruin?
That, dashed

and? Better w
days to linger out in pain.

770

Prometheus Bound.

PROMETHEUS.

Ill wouldst thou bear, methinks, my agonie
To whom it is not fore-ordained to die,
For death would be releasement from my pain.
But through all time no limit to my woes
Is set, till Zeus from sovereignty be hurled.

Io.

How! Can Zeus ever be from empire hurled?

PROMETHEUS.

Thou wouldst joy, methinks, such hap to see.

Io.

How should I not who suffer ill from Zeus?

PROMETHEUS.

That thus it shall be it is thine to learn.

Io.

By whom despoiled of his tyrannic sway?

PROMETHEUS.

Spoiled by himself and his own senseless plans.

Io.

But how? Declare, if telling bring no harm.

PROMETHEUS.

A match contracting he shall one day rue.

Io.

Divine

PROMETHEUS.

What matters it? This may not be disclosed.

Io.

Shall then his consort drive him from his throne?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, a son bearing stronger than his sire.

Io.

Is there for him no refuge from this doom?

PROMETHEUS.

No, none; unless I be from bonds released.

Io.

Who shall release thee 'gainst the will of Zeus? 790

PROMETHEUS.

One of thine own descendants it must be.

Io.

How so? shall child of mine free thee from bale?

PROMETHEUS.

Count ten descents, and after them a third.

Io.

Not easy is this oracle to spell.

PROMETHEUS.

So neither seek thy proper grief to learn.

Io.

Nay, hold not forth a boon and straight withdraw it.

PROMETHEUS.

Of two narrations I will grant thee one.

Io.

Set forth the twain, the choice then leave to me.

PROMETHEUS.

Granted: Shall I the remnant of thy woes
Plainly declare, or who shall set me free? 800

Chorus.

Of these to her the former grace vouchsafe
To me the latter; spurn not my request.
To her the sequel of her course disclose,
To me thy rescuer; for this I crave.

PROMETHEUS.

Since ye are eager I will thwart you not,
Nor will withhold what ye desire to know.
First, Io, thy vex'd course to thee I'll tell,
Which in thy mind's recording tablets grave.
When thou hast crossed the flood, limit betwixt
Two continents, fronting the burning East * 810
Trod by the sun, [then onward hold thy course.
Fierce northern blasts thou wilt encounter first;

* The poet here takes up the journey of Io where he left it in v. 754. The stream which is the limit of the continents is evidently the Kimmerian Bosphorus. She now travels towards the sun (i. e., eastward). This is, in Herodotus, the course of merchants travelling for gold, no doubt, to the Ural Mountains. In this journey the Volga must be crossed, most naturally at Asterakhan, where, it has been conjectured, its numerous mouths, and the Caspian, may explain the *πόρτον φλοίσβον* of our poet.

Shun thou their downward rush, lest, unaware,
 In wintry tempest thou be rudely caught.]
 The sounding main then do thou skirt until
 Kisthene's * Gorgonian plains thou reach,
 Where dwell the Phorkides,† maids grey with eld,
 Three, swan-shaped, of one common eye possessed,
 One common tooth, whom neither with his beams
 The sun beholdeth, nor the nightly moon;
 And near them dwell their wingèd sisters three,
 Gorgons, with snake looks, of men abhorred;
 Whom never mortal may behold and breathe.
 This for thy warning I relate to thee; 820
 But list another spectacle of dread.
 The unbarking hounds of Zeus, sharp-mouthed, beware,—
 The Griffins; and the Arimasian ‡ host,

* Kisthene. The character and situation of this legendary region vary according to the theory entertained as to the direction of Io's wanderings. Mr. Paley, to whose note I must refer for the grounds of his hypothesis, identifies it with Mont Blanc. This seems, however, directly to contradict the poet's statement that Io, after crossing the Kimmerian Bosphoros, travelled eastward on Asiatic ground.

† The swan-shaped daughters of Phorkys are resolved by modern mythologists into the weird and dusky clouds never illumined by the light of the sun; while their more terrible sisters, the Gorgons, are the hideous storm-clouds, that rush with fury across the sky.—Cox's *Mythology*, ii. 287. These legendary beings are placed by Hesiod in the far west (*Theog.* 274).

‡ The Arimaspi are placed by Herodotus to the east of his Scythia, which was the region north of the Euxine, bounded probably by the Tanais on the east (*Herod.* iv 13-37).

Horse-mounted, single-eyed, around the stream
 Who dwell of Pluto's gold-abounding flood.*
 To these approach not; a far border-land
 Thou next shalt reach, where dwells a swarthy race,
 Near the sun's founts, whence is the Æthiop river.‡
 Along its banks proceed till thou attain
 The mighty rapids, where from Dyblino heights 830
 Pure draughts of sacred water Neilos sows.
 Ho to the land, three-cornered, thee shall guide,
 Nile-girt, where, Io, 'tis ordained for thee
 And for thy sons that far-off colony
 To found;—if aught of this seem dark to thee,

* The theory which identifies "the ford of Pluto" with the Tartessos of Spain (the Guadalquivir) seems also at variance with the express statement of the poet. My friend Professor Newman conjectures that this gold-flowing stream was the Ural. The gold of the Ural mountains is still celebrated. The Arimaspi, with the Grypes, were, moreover, the recognised inhabitants of this gold region.

‡ Io is told by Prometheus that she is to travel eastward till she comes to the river Æthiops, which she is to follow till it falls into the Nile. According to the geographical theories of the earliest Greeks, this condition was fulfilled by the Indus. Arrian (vi. 1) mentions that Alexander the Great, when preparing to sail down the Indus (having seen crocodiles in the river Indus, and in no other river except the Nile . . .), seemed to himself to have discovered the sources of the Nile; as though the Nile, rising from some place in India, and flowing through much desert land, and thereby losing its name Indus, next . . . flowed through inhabited land, being now called Nile by the Ethiopians of those parts, and afterwards by the Egyptians. Virgil, in the 4th Georgic, echoes the obsolete error.

Or hard to spoil, ask and be taught in full ;
For leisure have I, more than I desire.

Chorus.

If aught untold of her sore-wasting course
Remains by thee to be unfolded, speak.
But if thou hast told all, to us vouchsafe 840
The boon we craved ; its scope full well thou knowest.

PROMETHEUS.

She of her roaming hath the limit heard,
But yet that she may know that not in vain
She heard my tale, her woes ere coming here
I will relate, sure pledge my words are true.
Tedious array of words I shall omit,
And of thy roamings reach at once the goal ;
For when Molossia's plains thy foot had trod,
Round lofty-ridged Dodona, where is found 850
The seat prophetic of Thesprotian Zous,
And, portent past belief, the speaking oaks,
By which full clearly, in no riddling phrase,
Wast hailed as the illustrious spouse of Zous,
Fate-destined,—doth this flatter thee at all ?—
Thence, fiercely stung, along the sea-washed tract,
To Rhœa's mighty gulf didst hurry,—whence
In courses retrograde wast rudely tossed.
But know thou this, that through all future time
That sea-gulf shall the name Ionian bear,
To all mankind memorial of thy way ; 860
These then to thee be tokens of my mind,
That more discernoth than doth meet the sense.

Such oracle my mother, born of old,
 Thetis, bear Titaness, to me rehearsed.
 But how and where, to tell, needs lengthy speech,
 Nor would the knowledge aught advantage thee.

Io.

Ah me! ah woe is me!
 Brain-smiting madness once again
 Inflames me, and convulsive pain.
 The gad-fly's barb, not wrought with fire,
 Stings me; against my breast
 Kicks my pent heart with fear oppress'd. 900
 Mine eyeballs roll in dizzy gyro;
 Out of my course by frenzy's blast
 I'm borne. My tongue brooks not the rein,
 And turbid words, at random cast,
 'Gainst waves of hateful madness beat in vain.

[Exit.]

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Sage was the man, ay, sage in sooth,
 Who in his thought first weigh'd this truth,
 And then in pithy phrase express'd:—
 "That woe-lock in one's own dogroo is best."
 That not where wealth saps manly worth, 910
 Nor where pride boasts its lofty birth,
 Should son of toil repair in marriage quest.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Never, oh never, Fates, may ye,
 Dread powers primeval, gaze on me

A fall disgraceful, not to be endured. 940
 Such wrestler now, himself against himself,
 He arms for battle;—portent hard to quell;
 Who flame shall find surpassing lightning's glare,
 And crash more mighty than the thunder-roll;
 Who the sea-trident, earth-convulsing plague,
 Poseidon's spear, shall shatter;—then shall Zeus,
 When 'gainst this evil he hath stumbled, learn
 How wide apart are servitude and sway.

Chorus.

Such taunts on Zeus thy wish, I trow, inspire.

PROMETHEUS.

Both what shall be, I speak, and what I wish. 950

Chorus.

And must we look for one o'er Zeus to reign?

PROMETHEUS.

Yea, pangs than those more crushing shall he bear.

Chorus.

How canst thou fail to fear, hurling such words?

PROMETHEUS.

What should I fear who am not doomed to die?

Chorus.

To keener struggle he may sentence thee.

PROMETHEUS.

So let him then! all is by me foretold.

Have I not known two potentates cast down?
Ay, and a third, now reigning, I shall see
In basest and most sudden overthrow. 980
Seem I to thee before these upstart gods
To quail or cringe? Far from it, nay, no whit.
But get thee back with speed the way thou camest,
For of thy quest thou'lt nothing learn from me.

HERMES.

E'en by such haughty wilfulness before
Didst thou to these dire moorings bring thyself.

PROMETHEUS.

This my ill-fortune, be thou well assured,
I would not barter with thy servitude.
This rock to lackey better 'tis in sooth
Than trusty scout be born to father Zeus. 990
Thus, as is fitting, scorn replies to scorn.

HERMES.

Thou seem'st to revel in thy present state.

PROMETHEUS.

Revel? Oh might I in such revel see
My foes! And thee among them do I count.

HERMES.

Mo too thou holdest guilty of thy ills?

PROMETHEUS.

Shortly to speak, all gods I hate, whoe'er,
By me bestoad, maltreat me wrongfully.

No torture is there, no device whereby 1010
Zeus shall persuade me to reveal those things
Before these woo-inflicting bonds be loosed.
Let then his blazing lightnings hurtle down ;
With white-winged snow and earth-born thunderings
Let him in ruin whelm and mingle all ;
For naught of those shall wrench my steadfast will
To tell by whom he must from empire fall.

HERMES.

Mark now if helpful this may seem to thee.

PROMETHEUS.

Of old my course was looked to and resolved.

HERMES.

Take heart, O foolish one, take heart at length 1020
To deal discreetly with these present ills.

PROMETHEUS.

Idly, like beating wave, thou troublest me
With exhortation. Harbour not the thought
That I, in terror at the will of Zeus,
Effeminate of mind shall o'er become,
And him whom hugely I abhor, beseech,
With woman-aping palms to heaven upturned,
To loose me from these fetters. Not a whit.

HERMES.

Much may I speak, it seems, and speak in vain ;
For nothing moved or softened is thy heart
By prayers ; but thou, like newly-yok'd colt, 1030

to search for prudent counsel. Be advised!
or to the wise it bringeth shame to err.

1060

PROMETHEUS.

To me who know them, hath he told
His messages, with utterance shrill.
But nowise I unscomly hold
That foe from foe should suffer ill.
So 'gainst me now be hurled amain
Curled lightning's two-edged glare!
By thunder and spasmodic whirl
Of savage gales be upper air
Madly convulsed! Let hurricane
Earth from its deep foundation rend,
E'en from its roots. Let ocean's wave,
Surging aloft, tumultuous rave,
And, foaming, with the courses blend
Of heavenly stars! Ay, let him hurl
This body to the murky gloom
Of Tartaros, in stubborn whirl
Of fortune caught! Do what he will
My death he may not doom.

1070

HERMES.

From fools brain-stricken may one hear
Such counsels and such words. But say,—
What sign of madness lacketh here?
What respite knows his frenzied ire?
Nathless do ye, who thus condole
With his sore pangs, far hence retire.

1080

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHORUS, THE DAUGHTERS OF DANAOS.
DANAOS.
PELASGOS, KING OF ARGOS.
HERALD.

[SCENE.—*The sea-shore: on one side the sea, on the other the gates of Argos. The Thymele is adorned with statues of APOLLO, ARTEMIS, HERMES, and other divinities. Enter from the shore the fifty daughters of Danaos, accompanied by their father—they are arrayed in Egyptian costume, and bear in their hands the suppliant bough, wreathed with wool. They form the Chorus, and as they advance twelve of their number chant the following ode.*]

INTRODUCTION.

THE trilogy to which this drama belonged, like that of which "The Seven against Thebes" formed the concluding member, was founded upon an ancient epic, by an unknown author. Of this poem little is known, except that it contained five thousand five hundred verses, and bore the title of "The Danaides."

The story which it embodied appealed powerfully to that passion for legendary genealogies which formed such a striking feature of the Grecian character. Alleged descent from a common ancestor was the bond of union between the members of every Grecian community, great or small; and as this legendary personage was usually of divine or semi-divine origin, even the humblest citizen thus felt himself brought into more or less direct filiation with the gods. The divine element thus, according to the popular conception, incarnated in humanity, culminated in the great national hero, Herakles, "the most renowned and ubiquitous of all the semi-divine personages worshipped by the Hellenes"—the only mortal who, from a life of toil and suffering on earth, was admitted to the god-head, and received into the society of Olympus. His

descendants, moreover, the Herakloids, associated with the Dorians in the conquest of the Peloponnesus, were glorified in the popular imagination as the founders of the great Dorian cities of Argos, Sparta, and Messenia, and as the introducers in those localities of a new social order. Peculiar interest thus attaches to Io, the progenitrix of Herakles, and to the birth of her offspring, Epaphos, an event celebrated in such glowing strains by the chorus of Suppliants (v. 580).*

In thus veiling the grosser features of the Io legend, as popularly conceived, while, at the same time, investing it with a more spiritual meaning, Æschylus appears not only as the great creative poet, but also as the true prophet of his generation. The numerous legends of which the story of Io may be regarded as a typical example embodied, in a vulgar form, the idea that it was only through association with the divine principle that man could rise to his true ideal as man. The poet seizes upon this idea, separates it from the grosser elements of the popular symbol, and extols the benignity of Zeus in thus seeking fellowship with mortals—giving prominence to the idea that through this agency alone the human race was raised to a higher level, physical and moral, than it could otherwise have attained.

The introductory character of "The Suppliants" has been inferred from the extreme simplicity of the plot, and from other considerations; accordingly, it is

* I have not alluded to the solar character of the Hellenic legends—a subject upon which so much light has been thrown by Professor Max Müller and Mr. Cox.

now generally regarded as forming the first member of a trilogy of which the succeeding dramas were "The Egyptians," and "The Danaides," both of which have been lost. Though deficient in dramatic interest, this piece is characterized by the remarkable beauty of the choral odes, which, from their sublime simplicity, and from the high conception which they embody of Zeus, as the supreme and omnipotent ruler, remind us occasionally of the Hebrew psalms.

It must be remembered, moreover, that, at the time of Æschylus, the national legends had not yet lost their hold upon the popular belief, and accordingly mythical events, such as the arrival of the Danaides in Argos, were considered not only as having influenced the subsequent destinies of Greece, but also as having been brought about by the inscrutable counsels of Zeus; the unfolding of whose designs, through the medium of tragedy, was regarded as the highest function of the poet.

The ancient legend tells of the strife between the sons of Belos; how Danaos was driven from his home by Ægyptos, who usurped his throne; how the latter sought to force the Danaides to marry his sons, and how Athena herself exhorted Danaos to flee with his daughters to the land of Io.

The introductory drama opens with their arrival, in the character of suppliants, at Argos, and is founded upon the protection accorded to them by the Argives and their king, Pelasgos: the appearance of the Egyptian herald, at the conclusion of the play, toge-

ther with his forcible attempt to carry off the suppliants, prepares the spectator for the arrival of the Egyptian pursuers in the succeeding drama. Attention has been called to the picturesque beauty of the opening scene, where, holding in their hands their wool-wreathed myrtle boughs, and arrayed in white apparel, which formed a striking contrast to their swarthy limbs, the suppliants grouped themselves under the statues of the gods: they would, moreover, be regarded with peculiar interest as wanderers from the valley of the Nile, "the wondrous river fed with snow," upon whose fountains no human eye had been permitted to gaze.

Of "The Egyptians," unfortunately, no fragments remain; it doubtless embodied the main incident in the tragic story of the Danaides. It is related in the legend that Danaos was elected king by the Argives, in place of Pelasgos; being unable to cope with *Ægyptos* and his sons, who still press their suit, he is compelled to yield to their demand, and promises to give his daughters in marriage to their detested suitors. In secret, however, he furnishes each with a dagger, enjoining her, at the same time, to slay her lord during the nuptial night. The terrible deed was executed. *Hypermnestra* alone, soothed by love, and preferring the reputation of cowardice to that of blood-guiltiness (Pro. 887), spared *Lyneus*, the partner of her couch. Here one duty could not be observed without violating another, and thus was brought about that collision between two primary principles of human nature, the reconciliation of which constitutes the essence of the

Æschylean drama. The remark of Grote with reference to this feature of Grecian tragedy will be perused with interest: "The tragedian," he says, "not only appeals more powerfully to the ethical sentiments than poetry had ever done before, but also, by raising these grave and touching questions, addresses a stimulus and challenge to the intellect, spurring it on to ethical speculation."

From the Hellenic point of view, *Hypermnestra* was regarded as a criminal, while the bloody deed of her sisters was extolled as an act of heroism, enjoined not only by their father, but by the gods themselves.

The suitors, moreover, are represented from the first as in the highest degree insolent and overbearing: barbarians, they had dared to invade the sacred soil of *Hellas*, and the vengeance which had overtaken them would ally itself in the popular imagination with the destruction of the Oriental hosts which had so recently crowned the grand contemporary conflict between *Persia* and *Hellas*. This feeling would be heightened by the war between *Egypt* and *Athens*, which began B.C. 462.

The trial of *Hypermnestra* most probably formed the principal subject of "The Danaides," the concluding member of the trilogy. From a fragment of the prologue which has been preserved, we learn that the drama opened with the hymn with which it was customary to awaken the newly-married pair:

"Since now arises the bright lamp of day,
The bridegrooms I awake with friendly lay,
Chanted by choral bands of youths and maids."

The horrors of the bridal night would thus be revealed, together with what was regarded as the treacherous clemency of Hypermnestra. According to the ancient story, she was cast by her father into prison, and subsequently brought to trial before a court with the constitution of which we are not acquainted. The goddess Aphrodite herself appears to plead her case, reminding us of the trial of Orestes before the court of Areopagus, when Pallas Athena, as president, gave her casting vote in his favour.

One fragment from the address of Aphrodite has been preserved :

"Longs the pure sky to blend with Earth, and Love
Doth Earth impel to yield to his embrace;
The rain-shower, falling from the slumberous heaven,
Kisses the Earth; and Earth brings forth for mortals
Pasture for sheep-flocks and Demeter's grain.
The woods in spring their dewy nuptials hold;
And of all these I am in part the cause."

Hypermnestra was acquitted, and from her union with Lynceus sprang in course of time the demigod Herakles. The remaining daughters of Danaos were purified from the stain of blood by Athena and Hermes, or, according to another form of the legend, by Zeus himself.

THE SUPPLIANTS.

MAY Zeus, by Suppliants revered,
Propitious view our naval train,
From Nile's fine-sanded mouths who steered
Across the billowy main.

The heavenly region left behind
Whose fields with Syria's fields unite,
Guiltless we roam, not blood-defiled
And by the state's decree exiled,
But wedlock with abhorrent mind
Shunning; for by Ægyptos' brood,
Kin of our blood, to marriage woo'd,

We flee the unhallowed rite.

Danaos, our father and our guide,*
Prime councillor of wisdom tried,
Casting for these affairs the die,
Of ills the noblest chose, to fly,
Free from constraint, the sea-wave o'er,
And anchor drop on Argos' shore,
Whence, boasting its descent, our line,
From her, the heifer hornet-stung,

* *συναγωγος*—party leader.

Through breathing and through touch divine
Of Zeus, hath whilom sprung.

Wherefore, on what more friendly land
Than this, a refuge could we find, 20
These sacred branches, wool-entwined,

Bearing with suppliant hand?
O city! Earth! O waters clear!
Supernal gods, and powers severe
Below who hold your awful reign!
And Zeus, third saviour, (guardian thou
Of righteous men,) our suppliant train
Tender of sex, receive ye now,
With kindly reverence native hero.

But for Ægyptos' haughty brood, 30
Swarm of rude males, or e'er they gain
Firm footing on this marshy coast,
Their swift-oared galley and their host
Sweep seaward; there by hurricane,
By thunder, lightning, and the rain
Tempestuous driving,—ere, as prize,
They seize this kindred sisterhood,
And our unwilling beds profane,
Trampling time-honoured sanctities,—
O'erwhelm them in the savage flood.

STROPHE I.

Him I invoke, beyond the sea 40
Our champion, progeny divine*

* *ἵερ νάϊος*—literally, divine call.

The Suppliants.

ANTISTROPHES II.

Driven from her streams and woodlands green,
Lamenting the familiar scene,

She pours a strange wild strain.
Her child she mourns in tuneful breath,
By her own hand consigned to death,
Through rage maternal slain.

STROPHES III.

Thus in Ionian strain,
Of plaint enamoured, I complain,
The while my soft, Nile-mellowed cheek I rend,
And heart unused to tears.
Blossoms I cull of grief, while fears
Possess me, lest our suppliant land, 70
Escaped from that mist-shrouded land,
Find here no guardian friend.

ANTISTROPHES III.

But natal gods, whose eye
The right beholdeth, hear my cry,
Or yield to graceless youth its will complete;
But hating haughty wrong,
Vouchsafe to wedlock justice meet.
Even to those who worsted fly,
An altar yieldeth bulwark strong,—
Dread awe of gods on high.

STROPHES IV.

Though Zeus plan all things right,* 80

* The text is corrupt.

The Suppliants.

STROPHE VI.

Thus I complain, in piteous strain,
Grief-laden, tear-evoking, shrill;

Ah woe is me! woe! woe!

Dirge-like it sounds: mine own death-trill
I pour, yet breathing vital air.

Hear, hill-crowned Apia, hear my prayer!

Full well, O land, 110

My voice barbaric thou canst understand;

While oft with rendings I assail

My byssine vesture and Sidonian veil.

ANTISTROPHE VI.

My nuptial rite in heaven's pure sight
Pollution werc, death-laden, rude;

Ah woe is me! woe! woe!

Alas for sorrow's murky brood!

Where will this billow hurl me? Where?

Hear, hill-crowned Apia, hear my prayer; 120

Full well, O land,

My voice barbaric thou canst understand,

While oft with rendings I assail

My byssine vesture and Sidonian veil.

STROPHE VII.

The oar indeed and home with sails

Flax-tissued, swelled with favouring gales,

Staunch to the wave, from spear-storm free,

Have to this shore escorted me,

DANAOS.

Then dally not; be your design achieved.

[*The Chorus place themselves near DANAOS.*]

Chorus.

O Zeus! my sorrows pity ere I die.

DANAOS.

If he be gracious, all may yet be well.

Chorus.

• • • • •

DANAOS.

Now do ye invoke this bird of Zeus.*

Chorus.

Lo! we invoke the Sun's sustaining beams.

DANAOS.

Apollo too, pure god, exile from heaven. 210

Chorus.

Knowing this lot, he can for mortals fool.

DANAOS.

So may he now, and stand our prompt ally.

* "The bird of Zeus" is interpreted by the scholiast to mean the sun, for it arouses us from sleep as the cock does. Pausanias distinctly asserts that the cock was considered sacred to the sun (lib. v. 25, 5); and that the sun was worshipped by the Argives (lib. ii. 18, 3). Probably there was some fancied connection between *αἰκτῶρ* and *ἡλίκτῶρ*, the Homeric title of the sun (Il. xix. 308; Hymn. ad Apoll. 369).—*Palcy.*



King.

As from what soil this troop may we salute, 230
 Band un-Hellenic, in barbaric robes
 And folds luxuriant? This female gear
 Nor Argos knows, nor any tract of Hellas.
 How without heralds, without public hosts,
 E'en destitute of guides, ye to this land
 Fearless have dared to come, is marvellous!
 Branches, indeed, as is the suppliant's wont,
 Lie near you, hard by these Agonian gods;
 By this alone may Hellas form surmise;
 And many other things to guess were just, 240
 Were none at hand by living voice to tell.

Chorus.

Touching my garb not falsely hast thou spoken;
 But whom do I address? A citizen,
 Or temple-guard, or leader of the state?

King.

In that regard speak thou and answer make
 Fearless; earth-born Palacchthon's son am I,
 Of this Pelasgic country potentate.
 And they this soil who reap, from me, their lord
 Race of Pelasgi rightfully are named.
 For all the land through which clear Strymon flows, 250
 Towards the setting sun, my sway doth own.
 My realm the lands of the Perrhæbi gird,
 Those beyond Pindus to Paeonia near,
 And high Dodona. Ocean's watery bourn

Dwellers in land hard by the Æthiops' home.
Haply, if armed with bows, I you had doomed
Unlorded flesh-devouring Amazons.
Instructed I shall better understand,
How ye descent and race from Argos claim.

Chorus.

They say that Io, in this Argive land,
Of Hera's temple bare of yore the keys.

King.

True, certes;—widely the report prevails.—
Runs not the tale that Zeus a mortal loved? 290

Chorus.

Ay, and with dalliance not from Hera veiled.

King.

How ended then these royal jealousies?

Chorus.

The goddess to a heifer changed the maid.

King.

Zeus surely ne'er would touch a fair-horned heifer.

Chorus.

In fashion of a bull they say he came.

King.

What further wrought the mighty spouse of Zeus?

KING.

[What offspring then had Zeus-born Epaphos? *] 310

Chorus.

Libya, with name adorned of mightiest land.

KING.

What other scion of this stock dost name?

Chorus.

Sire of two sons, Belos, my father's father.

[*Pointing to DANAOS.*]

KING.

Tell me, I pray, his name with wisdom fraught!

Chorus.

Danaos, whose brother boasteth fifty sons.

KING.

Of him too grudge not to declare the name.

Chorus.

Ægyptos.—Knowing now mine ancient race
'Tis thine an Argive train from dust to raise.

KING.

To me some ancient tie ye seem to hold
With this our soil. But your parental home 320
How have ye dared to leave? What chance befel?

Chorus.

Pelagic king, choquered are human ills;

* This line is conjectural.



Nor gracious is it to despise those prayers.
 Perplexed I am and fear my heart distracts,
 To act or not to act, and bide my chance.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

The jealous watcher mark enthroned on high,
 Guardian of mortals travail-worn,
 Who to those near for aid apply,
 And find their lawful claims denied.
 At suppliants' wail forlorn
 The wrath of Zeus doth bide
 Implacable for aye.

380

King.

But if Ægyptos' sons have power o'er thee,
 As next of kin, pleading their city's laws,
 Who would desire such pleading to withstand?
 To native customs thou must make appeal,
 That legal rights against thee they have none.

Chorus. STROPHE III.

Ne'er may I subject be to men's rude might;
 Escape from baleful marriage-tie,
 Star-guided, I mark out in flight.
 But Justice' self now taking for ally,
 Side with the holy gods and judge the right.

390

King.

Judgment not easy: choose me not for judge.
 Before I told you, I, though chief in sway,
 Cannot herein without my people act.—



*The Suppliants.**Chorus.*

With tablets new these statues they shall grace

King.

Thy words are riddles; plainer be thy speech!

Chorus.

Forthwith ourselves we'll strangle from these gods.

King.

A word I hear piercing my very heart. 460

Chorus.

Thou hast it now, for I thine eyes have purged.

King.

Divers these troubles, hard to struggle with;
 A host of ills bursts o'er me like a flood;
 Ruin's unfathomed sea, full hard to cross,
 I've entered; harbour from the storm is none.
 For if I spurn your prayer, pollution dire
 Thou namest, overtowering arrow's flight.
 But if before the walls taking my stand,
 I try the issue with Ægyptos' sons,
 Thy kinsmen;—bitter is the cost to stain 470
 With blood of men the soil, for women's sake.
 Yet needs must I revere the wrath of Zeus,
 The suppliants' god; for, among mortal men
 No awe more dread. These branches in thine arms
 Taking, thou aged father of these maids,
 Forthwith on other shrines of native gods

Chorus.
With tablets new these statues they shall grace

King.
Thy words are riddles; plainer be thy speech!

Chorus.
Farthwith ourselves we'll strangle from these gods.

King.
A word I hear piercing my very heart.

Chorus.
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Thy kinsmen;—bitter is the cost to stain
With blood of men the soil, for women's sakes.

Yet needs must I revere the wrath of Zeus,
The suppliants' god; for, among mortal men
No awe more dread. These branches in thine arms
Taking, thou aged father of these maids,
Farthwith on other shrines of native gods

480

470

The Suppliants.

43

Lay them; that all the citizens may see
Tokens of this thy visit. Touching me
Let fall no random word; for ever prone
The people are to blame authority.
These things beholding, some, to pity stirred,
The insolence may hate of this male troop.
So with the folk more favour shall ye find.
For to the weaker side all bear good will.

480

DANAOS.

A precious boon is this for us, to win
A patron so august, the reigning prince.*
But native escort and interpreters
Send thou with us; so may we surer find
The temple-fronting altars, and abodes,
Friendly to guests,† of city-guarding gods,
And may in safety pass amid thy town.
Unlike are we in feature and in garb,
For Noilos not in type of Inachos
His offspring rears. Beware, lest confidence
Give birth to terror;‡ for in sooth, ere now
Through ignorance hath friend by friend been slain.

490

King.

March with him guards, for well the stranger speaks.
Lead to the city altars, seats of gods;

* I adopt *ἐγκρίωντα*—Professor Newman's emendation for *εὐρίωντα*.

† For the second *πολιτοσώχων*, which is probably corrupt, Professor Newman suggests *πολυλλίστορος*, or also *πολυ-ξείνου*. I adopt the latter.

‡ *φόνον* seems to me to give better sense than *φόνον*.

And changing watchwords, needless is much talk,
While ye this seaman guide, suppliant of gods.

[Exit DANAOS, with attendants.]

Chorus.

He hath thy best, thus tutored let him go;
But for myself,—how act? Where safety find?

KING.

Leave here these branches, token of thy need. 500

Chorus.

Thy hand and voice obeying, them I leave.

KING.

Now to this open grove betake thyself.

Chorus.

But how should grove unhallowed shelter me?

KING.

As prey to birds we will not give thee up.

Chorus.

What if to men more dire than dragon-brood?

KING.

A kindly answer give to kindly words.

Chorus.

No marvel if I anxious am, through fear.

KING.

But fear to gentle blood unseemly is.

STROPHE II.

Back where my mother trod the wold,
 Her ancient haunts, flower-gondring meads,
 Pastures where yet the hoifer feeds,
 I now betake me,—whence of old,
 Brizo-goaded, and distracted, speeds
 Through many a tribe of mortal men,
 Io;—and while she holds in ken *
 The adverse shore, straight through the sea,
 path she cleaveth, led by Destiny. 540

ANTISTROPHE II.

Through Asia's land in wild career,
 Right o'er sheep-pasturing Phrygia's plain,
 Till Tenthra's Mysian towers appear,
 And Lydian vales,—she scours amain;
 Cilicia's and Pamphylia's height
 Leaving behind, she speeds her flight
 O'er banks of over-flowing streams,
 To the fair land with corn that tooms,
 region deep-soiled to Aphrodite dear.

STROPHE III.

Pierced by her winged herdsman's sting, 550
 The lea she gains all fostering,—

* It is difficult to determine how the words ought to be
 ined. I place the comma after *κυμαίας*, and interpret
when, she fixes as her goal. If the comma is placed after
καρπύων, the passage may be translated thus: "And
 suspiciously dividing the two continents, she fixes the billowy
 trait as the limit between them."

Life teeming, springs in very dool
 From Zeus, for who but he the pest 580
 Could stay, devised by Hera's spite?
 Thine, Zeus, the work! Hence, whose hails our race
 As sprang from Epaphos, errs not from right.

STROPHE V.

Whom of the gods more fitly now
 May I invoke for dools of grace?
 Father, Creator, King art thou,
 Whose forming hand begat our race;
 Artificer supreme, ancient of days,
 Zeus, the all-wise, whose breath each purpose sways.

ANTISTROPHE V.

Nor seated upon lower throne
 Wieldeth he delegated sway; 590
 Nor doth as his superior own
 Ruler whose word he must obey;—
 No, on his sovereign fiat waits the dool,
 To execute his mind's deep-ponder'd rede.

[*Re-enter DANAOS.*]DANAOS (*to his daughters*).

Take courage, with the natives all goes well.
 Decrees all-perfect have the people passed.

Chorus.

Hail, sire revered; herald to me most dear;
 But say what measure hath been ratified,
 Whereto the people's hand out-numbering sway'd?

STROPHE I.

Ye gods, heaven-born, if e'er before,
 Hear now the prayers that for this race we pour !
 Never may this Pelasgic town,
 Fire-wasted, lift the joyless cry
 Of Ares, wanton deity,
 Who men in other harvest-fields mows down !
 For that a gracious law
 They passed, to mercy stirred ; 630
 And for this pity-moving herd,
 Thy supplicants, oh Zeus ! felt righteous awe

ANTISTROPHE I.

Nor, voting on the side of men,
 The women's cause did they disdainful slight ;
 But the dread watcher hold in ken,
 Full hard to cope with, vengeful Might,
 Whom on its roofs what house could bear
 Wrathful ? For heavily he sitteth there.
 Yea, with their proper kin,
 Suppliants of Zeus severe,
 They venerate with pious fear ;
 Hence with pure altars they heaven's grace shall
 win. 640

STROPHE II.

Therefore, in tuneful rivalry, let vows
 Ascend from lips shaded by olive boughs.
 May pestilence ne'er drain
 Of manly strength this town ;
 Nor discord's lawless reign

Its joyless flight, and the Lykoian king
The nation's youth propitiously survey!

ANTISTROPHE III.

With every season's wealth may Zeus benign 670
Crown the rich earth, and mightily increase
Before the city walls the pasturing kine!

No'er may the gods' rich blessing cease!
May the well-omened song from every shrine
Ascend, and from chaste lips the solemn strain,
Joy-laden, lyre-enamoured, sound amain!

STROPHE IV.

Still may the people guard with constant zeal *
Their honours for the virtuous, while the sway 680
Of prudent counsellors the city's weal
Makes steadfast; and, ere arming for the fray,
May they, unscathed, just pacts with strangers seal!

ANTISTROPHE IV.

And let them, to the gods this land who hold,
With sacrifice and laurel bough draw near,
Jealous to keep their fathers' rites of old.
For venerable Justice hath enroll'd
This her third statute:—"Parents aye revere." †

* Among the various emendations which have been proposed of this corrupt passage that of Mr. Newman, *αἰσιμῶσι τιμᾶς* for *ἀριμίας τιμᾶς*, appears to me to give the best sense.

† The laws of Draco, called *θεσμοί*, are alluded to, among which this triple precept occurred, borrowed, as was said, from Triptolemus: *γῶνις τιμᾶν θεῶν καρποῖς ἀγᾶλλειν ζῆα μὴ εἰσεσθαι*.—*Paley*. In the text the triad of commandments seems completed by, Honour the national gods, and honour the national magistrates.

Lest that my lengthened flight no profit bring,
 Father, I faint through dread.

DANAOS.

Children, since ratified the Argives' vote,
 Take courage; well I know, for you they'll fight. 720

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

Insatiate of battle, fierce and lowd
 Egyptos' race;—to one who knows I speak.
 In timbered ships, blue-prowed, their rago to wreak,
 Hither with many a follower, sable-hued,
 In prosperous wrath they sped.

DANAOS.

Ay, but they here a numerous host will find,
 With thews well hardened in the noon-tide heat.

Chorus. STROPHE II.

Oh leave me not alone, father, I pray;
 Woman abandoned to herself is nought.
 In her no war-god dwells. Crafty are they 730
 In mind and counsel; dissolute in thought,
 Neither, like crows, for altars care they aught.

DANAOS.

Our interest, children, it would much avail
 Were they to gods as hateful as to thee.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.

No awe of gods before whose shrines we stand,
 Or of these sacred tridents, O my sire,

Neath soil of Apia, shall we flee,
 If refuge dark lurk anywhere?
 As sable smoke, ah, might I be,
 That to the clouds of Zeus draws near, 760
 Or, soaring without wings, ah me,
 Unseen, like viewless dust dissolve in air!

ANTISTROPHE I.

Scapeless is now the threatened doom;
 Throbboth my spirit steeped in gloom;
 Me hath thine out-look ruined, sire!
 I faint with dread. Let me expire,
 By twistings of the girdle slain,
 Or e'er the man by me abhorred,
 This form approach with touch profane! 770
 Rather, in death, let Hades be my lord!

STROPHE II.

Oh for a seat in upper air
 Where the dank vapours turn to snow;—
 Or might some beetling crag forlorn,
 Smooth, steep, unfriendly, lonesome, bare,
 The vultures' haunt, my plunge below
 Witness, ere forceful I am torn,
 Heart-piercing wullock's dreaded yoke to share.

ANTISTROPHE II.

That food of dogs I then should be, 780
 Or gorge the prey-birds, native here,
 Appals me not; for death is free
 From ills that sorrow's plaint endear.

The Suppliants.

Yea, that its doom may come, I pray,
 Ere I such nuptial couch ascend;—
 Or other refuge is there, say,
 From nuptial-bonds or other saviour-friend?

STROPHE III.

Lift to heaven the voice of wail,
 Hymns and supplications sing;— 790
 Prayers that may perchance avail
 Rescue from the gods to wring.
 View the conflict from the skies.
 Great Father!—Violence behold
 With righteous and not friendly eyes;
 Dear do thou thy suppliants hold,—
 Earth-ruling Zeus, all-mighty-king!

ANTISTROPHE III.

For Ægyptos' haughty race,
 Male of sex, a lawless brood,
 Me, poor fugitive, still chase,
 And with noiseful clamour rude, 800
 Sook to capture. But thy beam
 Poise thou o'er all,—O king supreme;
 For what to mortals without thee,
 Dread arbiter, may finished be?

Chorus.

1st. Woo, woo! alas! ah me!
 Lo the sea-robber nears the land.
 2nd. Wrecked be the pirate ere his hand
 On me lays forceful hold.

rd. Loudly I raise the voice of wail.
 th. Preludes to insult I behold
 That me will soon assail.
 th. Hasten, to shelter quickly flee,
 th. Cruel of heart are they, I trow;
 Unbearable by land and sea.
 th. Our patron, King! be thou.

[Enter Herald of the Sons of Egyptus.]

HERALD.

Haste to the barque, away, away!

Chorus.

Readings, ay readings of the hair,
 And cruel stripes I now must bear;
 Lopping of heads will come again,
 And murder's gory rain,

HERALD.

Plague on you, to the barque away.

Chorus. STROPHE I.

Would that where surging billows rave,
 Exalting in thy lordly pride,—
 Thou and thy nail-clenched barque beside,
 Had perished neath the wave!

HERALD.

Like to a captured run-a-way,
 Thee to my stocks I soon will bind.—
 Hence, I advise thee, put away
 The foolish phrensy of thy mind.

810

820

No there! The altars quit, I say;
 Hence to the barque;—I know no fear
 For what is held in reverence here.

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE I.

Never again, oh never more
 May I the cattle-nurturing flood
 Behold, whence life-sustaining blood
 Through mortals doth more amply pour! *

HERALD.

Cling to the shrine with reverent hand,
 Yet to the ship ye must away;
 Willing or not, ye must obey;—
 Off, off, ye wretches, to the strand,
 Lest, forcefully, against your will,
 Ye at my hands bear rudor ill.

840

Chorus. STROPHE II.

Alas! ah me!
 O may'st thou 'neath the billowy wave
 Perish, with none to save,
 Driven from thy course with adverse blast,
 And on Sarpodon's sandy headland cast!

HERALD.

Wail and lament and call upon the gods;
 The Egyptian barque thou shalt not overleap,
 E'en though a strain thou pour more bitter still.

850

Chorus.

Alas! ah me
 For this pollution! Words of dread

* *Sporeis* is the text of the MSS.

Thou speakest, mad with pride;
 May mighty Noïos, thee that bred,
 Overwhelm thee, and thy ruthless phrenzy hide!

HERALD.

With you to the galley double-prowed,—
 Obedient my command, full speed, let none delay;—
 For women's locks haling no reverence knows. 860

STROPHE III.

From these altars, father dear,
 With the spider's stealthy tread
 Or like vision, vision dread,
 Scaward now he draggoth me
 Woe, alas, ah me!
 Mother earth, O mother earth,
 Turn aside the voice of fear!
 Zeus! great king, thou son of earth!

HERALD.

These gods of Argos fear I not, for they
 Nor reared me up, nor nurtured me to old. 870

Chorus. ANTISTROPHE III.

Near me now he rageth, near,
 Biped serpent, void of ruth;
 Or like viper, whose fell tooth
 Wounds the foot, he holdeth me.
 Woe, alas, ah me!
 Mother earth, O mother earth,
 Turn aside the voice of fear!
 Zeus! great king, thou son of earth!

HERALD.

Unless, my mandate heeding, each one hies
 Shipward, her tunic shall no morey know. 880

Chorus.

Ho! City-leaders, princes all,
 Your suppliant they now enthrall.

HERALD.

Force I must use and drag you by your locks,
 Since to my words ye lend no ready ear.

Chorus.

We perish utterly, O king,
 Unlooked-for outrage suffering.—

HERALD.

Soon many kings, Ægyptos' sons, thou'lt see;—
 Cheer up! that rulers fail, ye shall not say.

[Enter KING with Attendants.]

KING.

Sirrah, what doest thou? Through what conceit
 This land dost outrage of Pelasgic men?
 Or thinkest to a woman's town art come? 890
 Thou, a barbarian,—too insolent
 Thy dealing with Hollenes. Having erred
 In many things, nought judgest thou aright.

HERALD.

How in despite of justice have I erred?

KING.

As stranger to behave, first, know'st thou not.

HERALD.

How so, when, finding what was lost, I lead—

KING.

What native patrons having first addressed?

HERALD.

Hermes, chief patron, prime Inquisitor.

KING.

Addressing gods, these gods thou honour'st not.

HERALD.

The doctics of Nelloe I revere.

KING.

Those here are nought, as from thy lips I learn. 900

HERALD.

[Pointing to the Suppliants.]

These lead I hence if no one snatch them from me.

KING.

Touch them, thou'lt rue it, and right speedily.

HERALD.

Certes, no hospitable word I hear.

KING.

Who spoil the gods find me inhospitable.

HERALD.

Go to Ægyptos' sons and tell them this.

KING.

Such utterance my spirit brooketh not.

HERALD.

But that with knowldge I may speak more plainly,
(For it becoms a herald to report
Clearly each circumstance,) how, and by whom,
Shall I, on my return, declare myself
Robbed of this female train, as kindred claimed? 910
Ares such plea by voice of witnesses
Decideth not; noither by silver's worth
Compoundeth quarrel; but, ere comes the end,
With bitter wrenoh from life falls many a hero.

KING.

Why toll to thee my name? Tutored by time,
Know it thou shalt and those who sail with thee.
As for these maids, provided they consent
With willing hearts,—if pious word prevail,—
Them thou may'st take; but by the public voice,
Unanimous, hath this decree been passed;—
Ne'er on compulsion to deliver up 920
This female train;—firmly through this resolve
The nail is driven, so to abide unmoved.
Neither inscribed on tablets nor scaled up
In folds of books these matters are, but them
Plainly thou hearest from free-spoken tongue.
Now, with all speed, betake thee from my sight.



1

HERALD.

'Tis then thy pleasure to incur new war:—
May victory and strength be with the males!

KING.

But in this land male dwellers ye shall find,
Drinking, I trow, no draughts of barley wine. 930

[To the Suppliants]

But maidens, taking heart, repair ye all,
With friendly escort, to the well-fenced town,
Shut in with deep device of many a tower.
The State owns many mansions, and myself
A palace have, built with no grudging hand.
Pleasant the lot in fellowship to hold
Glad dwellings; yet, if rather such your wish,
Make ye in separate abodes your home.
Choose of these offers that which seemeth best,
Most pleasing to your sisterhood; myself 940
Your patron-am, and all these burghers here,
For you their vote who pledged.—Why wait ye then
For others armed with more authority?

Chorus.

In return for deeds of grace
May thy lot with grace be crowned,
Here of Pelasgic race!
But hither send, with purpose kind,
Our sire, of brave and wary mind,
Danaos, prime councillor and guide.
His counsel will direct us here

Where we must dwell, and he decide
The place where malice may not reach.
For ready every one is found 950
Strangers to blame, But may the best betide!—
With fair repute and with unwrathful speech
Of citizens, handmaidens dear!
Your places take, as Danaos hath assigned,
A maid, as marriage portion, unto each.

[Enter DANAOS, with Attendants.]

DANAOS.

Ye to the Argives should with sacrifice,
As to Olympian gods, libations pour,
My daughters! for deliverers they have proved,
Beyond dispute. Wrathful from me they heard 960
What had been done by those most precious friends,
Your cousins, and forthwith, this body-guard,
As mark of honour they assigned to me,
Lost too, by secret spear-thrust slain, my death
Should curse undying bring upon the land.
Such favours reaping, justice bids us hold
In higher honour still their kindly grace.
These admonitions too ye shall inscribe
With many prudent maxims of your sire,
That Time this stranger company may test. 970
Each 'gainst the alien bears an evil tongue,
From which the slanderous word full lightly falls.
But, I exhort you, do me no disgrace,
Crowned as ye are with youth's attractive bloom.
Not easy tender ripeness is to guard;

Wild beasts despoil it,—mortals too no less,
 And winged tribes and treaders on the earth.
 Her gushing fruitage Kypris heraldeth,
 Nay, the unripe scaros suffers she to stay;
 And at the virgin's daintiness of form, 980
 Each passer-by, o'ercome by fond desire,
 Sends from his eye a shaft of suasive spoil.
 Forget we not then wherefore many a toil,
 And breadth of sea was furrowed by our keel.—
 Shame to ourselves, but triumph to our foes,
 Let us not work. A two-fold dwelling here,
 (One doth Pelasgos give, the city one,)
 Awaits us, free of charge;—easy the terms.
 This only,—guard the mandates of your sire.
 And honour hold in more respect than life. 990

Chorus.

Be the Olympians gracious in all else!
 Touching my youthful bloom take courage, father;—
 For I, unloos'd now plans the gods devise,
 Will never from my mind's first pathway swerve.

Semi-chorus A. STROPHES I.

Praise the blest gods, state-ruling powers supreme,
 The city's tutelary guardians praise,
 And those who haunt old Erasinus' stream.

Semi-chorus B.

Chant, maidens, your responsive lays; 1000
 For this Pelasgic state your anthems pour,
 Nor Neleus' mouths henceforth with hymns adore!

Semi-chorus A. ANTISTROPHES I.

Rather those rivers whose glad waters lave,
 With fruitful increase fraught, this Argive land,
 Soothing the earth with fertilizing wave.

Semi-chorus B.

Chaste Artemis, with pity view our band; 1010
 On us may Kytheria no'er impose
 Forced wedlock; may such prize reward our foes!

Semi-chorus A. STROPHES II.

Not that this friendly hymn disdains her sway
 Who reigns with Zeus and Hera, Kypris dear,
 Goddess of guileful spells, whose reign,
 O'er solemn rites extending, all rovere.

Semi-chorus B.

Sharing her honours, wait their mother near 1020
 Fond Yearning, Suasion also, who in vain
 Her plea no'er urgeth; Loves with whispering play,
 Harmonia too, share Aphrodite's sway.

Semi-chorus A. ANTISTROPHES II.

For us, poor fugitives, dire woes I dread,
 Yea, bloody wars my bodeful heart appeal;
 Since hither, eager in pursuit,
 In swiftly-wafted ships our foes have sped. 1030

Semi-chorus B.

But what is fated that must sure befall,
 For the vast mind of Zeus is absolute.

To us may end of wedlock come at last,
As to full many women in the past.

Semi-chorus A. STROPHE III.

From marriage with Ægyptos' seed
Thy suppliants, mighty Zeus, defend!

Semi-chorus B.

All yet propitiously may end.

Semi-chorus A.

Cure seekest thou for cureless ill.

1040

Semi-chorus B.

But certes thou the future canst not read.

Semi-chorus A. ANTISTROPHE III.

How search of Zeus the hidden will?
A fathomless abyss, I trow.

Semi-chorus B.

For modest blessings pour thy prayer.

Semi-chorus A.

What moderation urgest thou?

Semi-chorus B.

What Heaven ordaineth, that with patience bear. 1050

Semi-chorus A. STROPHE IV.

From us this wedlock's hateful hostile rite
May sovereign Zeus avert, of old who freed

1000

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NOTES.

THE SUPPLIANTS.

7. For γνωσθεῖσαι I think should be read, ἐξωσθεῖσαι, *extruded*.

8. αὐτογένητον φυζάνορα is the old text. The sense seems to require an epithet meaning *voluntary*, in contrast to *legal expulsion*. Perhaps the word αὐτάγγελτος (Ionic for αὐθαίρετος) has been dropped out, from its similarity to αὐτογένητον. Then we obtain, with perfect sense and emphasis—

ἀλλ' [αὐταγγέλταις] αὐτογένητον
φυζαναρ[ίαις] γάμον Αἰγυπτου
παίδων ἀσεβῆ τ' ὀνοταζόμεναι.

In 27, 38, 40, it is difficult for me to believe that so careful a poet as Æschylus would write δέξαιθ', σφετεριζόμενον, ἐπιτεκλόμεναι; which make the syntax as loose as that of Thucydides. I believe in δέξασθε (in apposition to πέμψατε), σφετεριζόμενους (plural, as δλοιντο) ἐπιτεκλόμενα (in apposition to ἐπιλεξαμένα). Moreover, in 48, τόνδ' ἐπιλεξαμένα (not ὄντ') seems the rightful structure. But nothing of this affects the general sense.

45. ἔφαψιν has no satisfactory syntax (if what follows be correct), unless we may interpret it as a masculine *adjective*. In 43 the old text was ἀνθονόμου τῆς. Porson changed it to ἀνθονομούσας, which is not plausible to me. Much rather τῆς should be τὸν; and if ἔφαψιν may be adjectival, all is then plain. (Whether προγόνου should be πρόγονον, may be further inquired.)

52. The old text, τά τε νῦν, should, I think, be γεγετᾶν, which completes the splendid conjectural corrections of

Hermann and others, who change τεκμήρια τὰ τ' ἀνόμοι' οὔ to τεκμήρι', ἃ γαιονόμοισιν. This one example may justly incite us in nonsensical passages to conjecture boldly.

62. ἀπὸ χώρων ποταμῶν τ' is certainly wrong. A ver. simple correction will be ἀπὸ χώρων ποταμῶν τ', *from her feeling-places and streams*, or even *from her crafts and streams*. In Pindar we find χώρος λίοντος: in Eur. Iph. T 134, χώρων εὐδένδρων. (Hermann's ἀπὸ χλωρῶν πετάλων ἐγρομένα is audacity out of place.)

70. If δειμαίνουσα be right, we have to join εἴτις with γόδου . . . in the sense of "I lament whether," which is certainly unnatural. Dindorf prints δέμα μένουσα, I suppose merely to show what the metre requires. If so, λῆτα ρέουσα (*imploring*) is the word apparently hidden under δειμαίνουσα; though λῆταίνουσα serves nearly as well.

78. For the old reading, βωμὸς Ἄρης φύγασιν, which is certainly wrong, an obvious correction is βωμὸς ἀρεφύγασιν which would be unexceptionable if we found it in the text. But other possibilities occur: thus the poet *may* have written Ἄρησφύγετον in imitation of the word Κρησφύγετον

80. Εἰ θεῖη Διὸς εὖ παναληθῶς! This is nonsense. To change Διὸς to θεὸς has no plausibility; all remains abrupt. θεὸς followed by Διὸς is scarcely possible. My present belief is that we get the poet's sense by Ἰθεία Διὸς ἐν παναληθείᾳ . . . which means, "In the straight line of Jove, though drawn with perfect accuracy, the heart's desire of Jove is not easy to trace." Then the abruptness vanishes and the argument is solid. Moreover, in the next line τοι seems to introduce a general maxim. This suggests to me that πάντᾳ which is weak, ought to be βροτῶ.

93. τὰν ἄποινον (the old text) is manifestly indefensible. Critics do not seem to have observed that in place of it we need the accusative after ἐξέπραξιν. Then we must put a full-stop after ἐξοπλίζει, and the sense needed will be given by Πῶντα νόον δαιμονίων! μνήμον ἴνω φρόνημά πω | αὐτόθεν ἐξέπραξεν . . .

101. The little word *καὶ* offends me, and suggests that *καὶ δαίμονας* should possibly be *παιδὸς ἄνους*. Is the spondee in the third foot satisfactory?

107. Remove the stop and join *ἐμπρηῆ* with *με*.

115, 116. *πελομένων καλῶς | ἐπιδρομῶς ὅθι θάνατος ἐστῇ*. This is mere chaos. The general sense needed is, that "incestuous marriages involve the gods in guilt:" *ἐναγία* must be the predicate. I propose to change *πελομένων* to *πῆλαι* *ἀν* *οὐ*, which gives the sense excellently. On comparing the strophe, it seems likely that v. 116 contains epithets of *τῆλα*, as v. 105 of *μέλα*. To read for v. 116 *ἐπιδρομα, νόθα, θανατοσσηῇ*, would be very close to the letters; but I think *θανατοσσηῇ*, "laden with death," more likely, and it is but *Γ* for *Π*. *Ἐπιδρομα* I render *invasive*.

118, 119. Punctuate with comma after *πῶνοι*, and with full-stop after *ἐπάξει*, and interpret, "The distresses are indefinable, into what the wave is to carry us;" that is, "It is doubtful, into what—"

127. Join *δορὸς ἀχείματος*, *escaping the storm of the spear*. I do not think that *δόμος δορὸς* can mean *a house of timber*, as Scholesfield seems to join it.

137. In place of the corrupt text the late Professor Conington well conjectured, *πάντα δι' σβίνουσ' ἀρωγὰς | ἄς φίλας ἀδμήτες*, where *ἄς* means *ἑας*, *her own*.

145. For the old text, *ἡ δακτυλον—τοῦγγαιον*, Wellauer's *φλίσκτυπον* and *τὸν γάϊον* seem to me a change greatly for the worse. *Γάϊον* surely cannot mean *infernal* (*χθόνιον*). "The earthborn giants, struck by the bolt of Jupiter," are assumed to be in Tartarus; hence *ἡ Δακτυλον γίνος τοῦγγαῖον*, "where (are) the giants," is quite appropriate.

203–206, of Scholesfield, but 207–10 of the Oxford pocket edition, seem to be out of order. The two first lines should change places, and the fourth should be first.

244. *τηρὸν* is difficult to justify and difficult to condemn; but I think *λερόραβδον* to be a fair and satisfactory correction of *λερὸν ῥάβδον*.

309. It seems impossible that *ῥυσίων* can be correct. I suggest *ψαυσίων*, *stroking, caresses*, equivalent to *ἐπαφῆσίων*. The next line, which is lost, may have been *τίς οὖν ἐς Ἐκταφον* (or *τίς δῆτα κείνῃ*) *κλεινὸν ἀναφέρει γένος*;

394. *μὴ τοῖον*, for *unlucky, evil*, is not plausible. *μὴ τερπνόν* may suggest itself; but there are too many other possibilities.

437. *χρήμασιν* and *πορθουμένων* of the old text, seem to me perfectly right; and the next line, *ἄτης γε μείζω*, only to need *καὶ μάλ' ἐμπλήσαι* for *καὶ μέγ' ἐμπλήσαι*, which is unmeaning. Also v. 442, *ἀλγεινὰ*, &c. (which some wish to omit), needs only to change place with that which precedes it in the books.

457. *κοσμήσαι* should surely be *κοσμήσει*. The nominative is *μηχανή*, four lines above.

473. *ὑψιστος γὰρ ἐν βροτοῖς φόβος*. This can only mean that "Fear is the highest divinity among mortals;" while the king evidently means to say, that *Jupiter* is the highest object of fear to mortals. I think *ἐν* should be changed to *ὅδε*.

485. For the unmeaning *εὐ ρίοντα* I suggest *ἐγκρίοντα*, equivalent to *ἐμβασιλεύοντα*.

488. *πολισσούχων* all regard as wrongly repeated from the preceding line. One may suggest *πολυλλίστους*, or *πολυξείδους ἔδρας*.

492. The old *φόβον* seems to me quite right, and the change to *φόνον* quite wrong. "Beware, lest too much confidence produce alarm."

510. Perhaps *ὅστι* should be *οὐ σε*, as the sense seems to require.

521. *πιθοῦ τε καὶ γενίσθε*. Obviously to me *γενίσθε* has supplanted some epithet of *ἀνδρῶν*. The nearest word that I think of is *πανεχθῶν*. This is in itself irreprovable: *πιθοῦ τε, καὶ πανεχθῶν | ἀλευσον ἀνδρῶν ὕβριν*. A subtler conjecture, *ἀγνοισθῶν | ἀλευσον ἀνδρῶν ὕβριν*, has the advantage that copyists would be more likely to be puzzled with and

outrupt it than *παρεχθών*. To the Chorus the race of *Ægyptus* was a *holy* race; hence its outrageousness was the more portentous to her. The adjective *ἀγροειδής* would be a formation imitating *ἀλλοειδής*, *ἀλλοειδής*.

528. *γενοῦ πολυμήτωρ* cannot be right. Dindorf prints *πολυμήτωρ μετρί κακῇ*, I suppose, rightly regarding *ὑβρῶν* as a pyrrhic in the strophe. Apparently for *πολυμήτωρ* we need an accusative epithet of *αἶνον*, and for *γενοῦ* a genitive or dative, such as *γόνου* or *γοῆ* (not *γόνους*, for that occurs twice besides in the sentence). I doubtfully propose *νέωσιν εὐφρον' αἶνον | γόνου πολύμητον*. In the next line, *τοί* must be either interpreted *σοί*, I suppose, or changed into *σοί*. *Ἔσθιοι* seems to be for the prosaic *ἔσθιοι*, *settlers*.

544. *Μυσῶν | Λυδία τ' ἡ γαλᾶ*. There is something wrong in *τε*, as the metre shows. (I cannot agree to alter *ἔρεσσομένα* into *ἐρεθισμένα* as the remedy.) *Μυσῶν*, as the text stands, has no syntax. It might be changed to *Μυσῶν* or *Μυσοῦ*, only that some greater error may lurk in *τε*. The poet may have written something which had the syntax of *Μυσῶν | Λυδογενὲς γάλαον*, or *Μυσῶν | Λυδίῃ ἐν γαλᾷ*.

550. *εἰσικουμένον*, after *λαίνας*, is hardly credible. Dindorf's *εἰσικουμένη* does not remove this objection. Hermann's conjecture *ἐπεχειμένη* seems to me quite justified.

555. Surely *ὑδωρ τὸ Νεῖλου* ought to be *ὑδωρ τε Νεῖλου*. The poet says that the wind of the desert (*ρυφῶ μένος*) and the water of Nile come upon the snow-fol fields of Egypt. Like Herodotus, he supposed that snow, melting in the highlands of Abyssinia, kept the Nile full through the summer.

558. *θείας* is clearly wrong, yet it is hard to believe *θεάς* right. Some deeper change may lie hid—something like *ἀλγος ἔδου πονήρας*, I mean.

563. *τὰν μιν* refers to *ἔψιν*: hence I think we must have *δυσεχερῇ*, *scm.*, to continue the syntax. Perhaps also *στυγεύοντες* for *ἰσχυρόντες*, which is tame after *ἔψιν*, and gives an inferior rhythm.

572. I do not see how *βία* can be nominative to *ἀποστρέξει*. Until the lost line is supplied, all conjecture is infirm.

574. I protest against rendering *ἔρμα*, *ballast*, as an utter monstrosity, and suggest that it means *gem*, *germ*. Compare *Iliad*, iv. 117, and *ἔρματα* for *gems*, *ἔρμος*, a necklace.

580. The logic of *τίς γάρ* proves that the previous lines assert the progeny to have been Jupiter's; hence *Ζηνὸς* must be *predicate*, and *τὸ δὲ* cannot possibly be right. I propose to change it to *τόδε*.

589. For *ὑπ' ἀρχᾶς* we need a double iamb, such as *ὑπεργάτας*, *ὑπηρέτας*, but more probably *ὑπαρχέλας*. Further, the repetition of *οὐ τινος*, the abruptness and the wrong metre betray corruption. I suggest that *κρατύνει οὐ τινος* should be *κρατοῦντος*, which reconciles metre and syntax, and accounts for the article in *τὸ μείον*, "*his inferior*." *Θοίζων* means *sitting*, as undeniably in *Soph. Cēl. T. 2*. The syntax is then good, but subtle enough to have been liable to corruption: *ὑπαρχέλας δ' οὐ τινος θοίζων*, | *τὸ μείον κραισσόνως κρατοῦντος*, | *ἄνωθεν ἡμῶν σίβει κάτω*. The negative *οὐ* takes effect on both *θοίζων* and *σίβει*, "*he does not sit as an underling and revere a superior*." The last line then answers perfectly to *πατὴρ φυτοργός, αὐτόχειρ ἀναξ* of the strophe.

612. I think *παχύναι* should be the optative *παχύναι* (after *μήπορ*), here equivalent to *μολύναι*.

628. *ἀρότοις ἐν ἄλλοις* implies that *ἄροτος* in a literal sense has been named in the previous lines: I think, therefore, that *ἄχορον* has somehow come in place of the word *ἄροτος*. *τὸν ἄχορον βοῶν* of *Mars*, is defensible by *Euripides, Phœn.* 784–788, yet the whole sentence here is tangled. Which accusative is to precede *κτίσαι*, and which to follow it, is obscure. This objection would remain if we found *τὰν ἀρότων δύναι* ("*the ruin of harvests*") in place of *τὸν ἄχορον βοῶν*, or if *κτίσαι* were *τρέσαι*, which is easier. One can rewrite it in twenty ways; hence conjecture is unbridled. But besides, *πυρίφατον* ("*slain by fire*"!) is hardly admissible of a city:

πυρίβοτον, πυρίστατον, πυρίβοτον, are all more plausible. Finally, for τὰν Πελασγίαν πόλιν (which is the old text) I think τὴν Πελασγῶν πόλιν gives the probable metre; then in the antistrophe, for πρᾶκτορά τε σκέπον, which is certainly wrong, I would suggest πρᾶκτορ' αὐτόσκοπον.

636 is unsatisfactory in sense and metre; but possibilities are too many. For ἔχοι we may suggest ἔλατ' or ἔρατ'. For δυσπολέμετον ἔν, metre seems to need something like δυσπώλεμον, τὸν. A change of εἶναι to τίς is not plausible. In ἐν' ὀρέφῳ μαινόμεντα, to see an allusion to defilement by birds is detestable. One may suspect that μαινόμεντα ought to be ματεύοντα, investigating. Indeed, δυσπώλεμον, τὸν εἶναι ἂν δόμοι ἔλατ' | ἐν' ὀρέφῳ † ματεύοντα, barely goes beyond the changes necessitated by metre.

652. Γεραροῖσι, if correct, apparently must mean *old men*; yet the word γερόντων ("be freighted, or fraught") then applies very ill. Can Γεραροῖσι mean *honours*, i. e., gifts? If so, πρεσβευτέδοκοι ("ambassador-receiving") involves no tautology. But I think φλεγόντων ought to be κλειόντων: "let them *diffuse the report* that the city is well governed," or "how well governed is the city."

656. τὸν Ζεῖνός δ'. Surely the δὲ is wrong: γε would be better.

672. Paley well changes τὰς to γὰρ.

674. I like the Aldine reading ἐπιβέβησαν better than ἐνὶ βαρῶν or βαρῶσι. We probably all adopt μούσαν θέλει' with Ahrens and Hermann, for μούσαι θεαί τε.

678-680. The common text is certainly wrong; yet it may be corrected in more ways than one. For τὸ πτόλιω κρατῖναι I wish καὶ πτόλιω κρατῖναι, which explains syntax and sentiment, so as to open the poet's meaning, probably, thus: φυλάσσει τ' αἰσίμοισι τιμὰς | τὸ δῆμιον, καὶ πτόλιω κρατῖναι | προμαθίας ξυνέμνητι ἀρχή. This is the poet's ideal of a well-tempered free state. "Let the folk reserve honours (public offices) for the virtuous, and let a magistracy of common counsel establish the city by previous delibera-

tions." Προμαθίας is poetical for προβουλευματα. For αἰσίμοισι the old text has ἀτιμίας, which is manifestly wrong.

749. I think that after ἡλίου we should place a full-stop, and next for φιλεῖ read φιλεῖ δ'. This removes all difficulty of syntax.

756. For βουνίτι ἔνδικον (old text) perhaps βούνη, πάνδικον.

762. For ἀμπετῆσαις δοσως (old text) Paley excellently has ἀμπετῆς, ὥστος ὥς.

764. ἄφυκτον δ' οὐκεί' ἂν πῆλοι κίαρ (with καρδία in next line) cannot stand. I think of ἄδικτον δ' οὐκ εἴ' ἂν πῆλοι δέμας, or κάρα: but ἄλυκτον (capable of evasion) seems not impossible. Ἄφυκτον is just the opposite sense to what is wanted. In next line μελανόχρως is corrected to μελαινόχρως. I rather believe in μελαγχρόας, replacing the epic μελαγχροῖης.

768. Surely σαργάναις or ταργάναις should not be tampered with. Egyptian women use bass (papyrus?) where Greek women use laces.

773. πρὸς ὃν νίφη δ' ὑδρηλά—all see to be wrong. To change δὲ to δι' does not give us the right preposition, and does spoil the metre. Hermann is justified in believing that ὑδρηλά hides some epithet of νίφη. He fixes on κυφέλλα (εμπύη), a word so used by Callimachus, and, as Hermann tells us, said to have been used by Æschylus. It is therefore plausible. But if γίγνεται is right, and χιῶν predicate, I think πρὸς ὃν should be πρὸς ᾧ, against or close to which.

775. ἀπρόσδεικτος, a rock that "cannot be pointed at"! Rather, I think, ἀπρόσμηκτος, inaccessible.

780. τίς ἀμφ' αὐτὰς εἶτι πόρον | τέμνω γάμον καὶ λυτήρια. This chaos would be desperate, only that the metre of the strophe guides us. (Vindorf there changes καρδίας to κάρσας, quite caudally.) I see nothing for it but audacious conjecture, thus: ἐλθέτω μόρος πρὸ κοιῖτας γαμηλίου, τυχῶν | τὰνδ' ὑφ' αὐτῶν, τελεσφόρον | δεμνίων γάμον καλύπτραν. | Here τὰνδ' ὑφ' αὐτῶν is the σάργαναις of v. 768, and καλύπτραν is accusative in apposition to the sentence, as in Ag. 218, where we supply λέγω with ἀρωγία.

789-791 are sadly corrupt. For the old *δέ μοι παρ* I suggest *δόμοις*. Possibly, *μέλεια λιστῶν θεοῖς καὶ | τέλεια δόμοις πελόμενα μοι λύσιμα. μαχλοῦς δ' ἔπειθε, πάτερ*. Here I have written *μαχλοῦς* for *μάχημα*.

826. Another chaos. What of *ἔμην* is *† ξύλον σ' ἀναθήσας, | ἐπὶ δρᾶπνταν, | ?* and in antistrophe, *ἀγίας ἔχει* [thou holdest by] *βαθυχαίας | βαθρείας χερσίν. ὅπη, ὅπως, αἷ*.

854. Another desperate passage. What of *Λύμας* *δε προγάμους σὺ λάσκεις, περίχευνα βρονταίης σὸς ἔρωε· ἀλλ' ὁ μέγας—*

A strophe commences at 822, *εἶδ' ἀνδ' πολύρρυτον*, ending at *οὐ σείσω*; its antistrophe is from *μήποτε πάλιν τοι παλάμιαι* [*ἰμαίαι*]; then we have a system A, B, A', C, D, B', D', from 845, *αἰ αἰ*, to 879; then another strophe and antistrophe, *ἰὼ πύλαις ἀγροὶ and διαλόμεσθ'.*

979. *κἄλωρα καλύουσιν ὥς μένειν ἔρῃ*, is confessedly nonsense. The first word is corrected to *κῆωρα*, rather (I think) *κῆωρα*, since Herodotus has *ἄνωρος* and *ἀνωρία*. "*Ἄνωρα*, as less usual than *ἄωρα*, might get corrupted. Further, I suggest, *κῆωρα* [or *καὶ χλωρά*] *καλύουσιν' ἄνθος μένειν ἔρῃ*: that is, *ἔρῃ* (*φιλεῖ*) *καλύουσα*, "she loves to hinder the unripe from awaiting their bloom (their prime)."

983. For *μη πάθωμεν* I think we need *μη λαθώμεθ'* ("let us not forget"), unless a whole line is lost after *δορί*.

F. W. N.

THE END.

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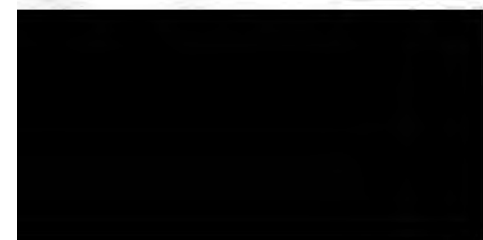
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